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ABSTRACT

Articles dealing with instructional approaches, faculty development, and student needs are presented. The 1984-85 collection includes: "An Evolving Partnership: The Community College-Secondary School Connection," by Cornelius V. Robbins; "What If Willy Loman Worked for You," by Paul W. Brennan; "Day Care Centers: The Versatile Student Support Service," by Anthony A. Adamo; "Cross-Disciplinary Writing: A Function of Faculty Development," by James Early; "Human Ecology: Liberal Arts for the Future," by M. Garrett Bauman and M. Thomas Cooper; "The Learning Disabled Student in the Community College," by Paula Beck; "The Classroom Connection: An Early Intervention Model," by Charles Croll and Linda Linville; "Computer-Assisted Instruction in Writing: The Freshman Composition & Research Paper Assignment and Donald Davis' Topoi," by Louis Chicatelli and Frank Madden; "Thinking Small: Some Hopeful Speculation about Faculty Development Programs," by Gail Rogers Rice; "A Preface to the Research Paper: The Student Seminar Approach to Literature," by Maryanne Vent; "The Technical/Medical Writing Lab: A Synthesis of Consultants, Computers, Composing, Credit and Interdisciplinary," by Christine M. Godwin; "Esprit: A Humanities Magazine," by Donald G. Parker and Barry John Capella; "Innovations in Laboratory Training for MLT AAS-Degree Students," by Myrtle M. Green and Sonja Hill; and "A Peer Evaluation," by Kay McKemy. (LAL)

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on teaching and learning
by faculty of the
community colleges
of the State University of New York

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1984-85

Foreword

Community Colleges are the "quick-change artists" of higher education. Their mission demands that they serve the widest variety of students and provide the most flexible programming. As local educational resources, they consistently reflect the shifting priorities of the citizens who support them.

Insight has since its inception in 1977 attempted to keep up new ideas of the sector of higher education which by its nature is most inventive. Until last year, *Insight* was the only publication of its kind in the nation — a collective sharing of instructionally-related thoughts by faculty of a statewide system of community colleges. Two other states have begun similar publications this past year, each crediting *Insight* as their inspiration.

Insight 1984-85, like its predecessors, presents a wide range of topics — from service to disabled students to day-care centers, to learning skills, to faculty development, to writing for students in health programs. As always, SUNY Community College educators continue striving to solve new problems and improve ongoing work. Through it all, the authors never lose sight of the emphasis on individual students.

Financial and editorial support for *Insight* comes from a unique combination of sources. The University's Faculty Council for Community Colleges, the statewide representative advisory organization for the faculty of the 30 SUNY Community Colleges, promotes the publication, provides the editorial board, assists on-campus distribution, and financially supports production. Financial support also comes from the State University of New York. Editorial coordination is handled by the SUNY Central Administration Office of Community Colleges. Typesetting and layout are done by and the SUNY Central Graphics Office. *Insight* is printed at the University's Central Print Shop. We are grateful to all for their assistance.

To all readers, I hope that *Insight* 1984-85 enhances your own efforts.

C. R. Wharton

Clifton R. Wharton, Jr.
Chancellor

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An Evolving Partnership: The Community College — Secondary School Connection

by
Cornelius V. Robbins
Deputy to the Chancellor for Community Colleges
State University of New York

Although the furor surrounding the report of the National Commission on Excellence in Education, *A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform*, has died a bit in the mass media, those who work in education continue to react to its indictments and implications.

Spinoff task forces and committees at nearly all levels of education are studying the Commission's recommendations, which generally call for raising standards, emphasizing the basics, improving teaching and designing ways to pay for it all.

Very few educators viewed the findings as revelations, and although there is some debate over individual recommendations, there appears to be considerable acceptance of the overall logic of future directions.

Moreover, a natural defensiveness is being heard from numerous sectors and individuals in education: No one (politicians, administrators, teachers, parents, etc.) wants to be blamed for putting the U.S. "at risk."

Such reaction is understandable, but certainly not relevant to future planning.

Instead, I would propose an acceleration of a trend begun long ago and very active in recent years: that of open, innovative communication between community colleges and institutions serving pre-college students. In New York the young are taught in high schools (public and private) and at BOCES (Board of Cooperative Educational Services).

The traditional articulation with high schools, i.e., informing students of offerings at the college level, has very much expanded into coordinated curriculum development, some formal, some not. The BOCES interaction is as widespread, but even more intense. Although the colleges and BOCES sometimes combine efforts to make programming more cost-effective for both institutions, the educational results are impressive, with basic skills and vocational training dominating.

Such cooperation for community colleges is a natural extension of their mission to be comprehensive local resources. The colleges, which reach out to serve an incredible variety of individuals and organizations, have matured greatly over the past ten years. No longer viewed as "second chance" institutions or the 13th and 14th years of high school, community colleges have earned the respect of educators and other citizens by providing quality transfer and career degree programs, dozens of short-term credit and non-credit courses, technical assistance for large and small businesses and an individualized approach to students which recognizes SUNY's "Full Opportunity" concept, a form of open admissions.

It is the latter service which most directly connects to the federal report, as New York community colleges accept all recent high school graduates of their respective sponsorship areas, regardless of the level of basic skills achieved, let alone other academic accomplishment. Thus, developmental studies (to improve reading, writing and computational ability) are accepted practice at community colleges, and have been for some time. It is the experience the colleges have in this area which should be most valuable to the schools which enroll students prior to colleges.

Admittedly, interaction between community colleges and secondary institutions has not fully developed in the field of developmental instruction, but several college faculties formally interact with their peers in high schools and/or BOCES. Such discussions, according to a recent survey of the colleges, have grown out of other kinds of cooperation.

Of 26 colleges resonding to the survey, 13 reported

that they had advanced standing agreements with BOCES and/or high schools in their area. Seven have early admissions programs for high school seniors. Fifteen currently contract with local BOCES to offer adult/vocational education courses. Sixteen institutions conduct some kind of meetings between community college faculty and their colleagues at high schools and/or BOCES.

Fiscal stringencies, for example, have drawn BOCES and community colleges together, with contracts being developed allowing the colleges to fully or partly assume the adult education responsibilities of BOCES. Most often, the college will offer a variety of vocational courses at the BOCES site. The courses are normally those formerly conducted by BOCES and additional offerings traditionally offered on a non-credit basis by the college, usually industry-oriented outgrowths of degree programs. There are a wide variety of such agreements, with no standard format or formal process for development and implementation. By combining efforts, including the sharing of facilities, both BOCES and community colleges deliver services for less money.

For instance, since 1981 Westchester Community College and Putnam/Northern Westchester BOCES have operated under a contract, the terms of which call for college to sponsor vocational non-credit courses at the BOCES site. The courses are in a variety of fields, ranging from refrigeration and air conditioning to health occupations to computer programming. Dozens of courses are offered.

So many agreements are being developed that the State Education Department is working toward the development of model agreements to make sure cooperation easier for all involved.

Community colleges have for several years conducted both early admission and advanced standing programs for high school and BOCES students. For example, Dutchess Community College in Poughkeepsie conducts both programs. Early admission is open to all county seniors (and some exceptional juniors) on both a full-time and part-time basis, with written approval by high school officials. The college provides individual advisement for students who may benefit either educationally or vocationally by beginning college study earlier than the traditional post-diploma time. Courses taken at DCC earn credit toward a degree; and if the high school agrees, the courses may also be used to fulfill high school graduation requirements. Dutchess also has articulation agreements with BOCES in the areas of nursing, building management and maintenance technology, office practice and data processing. These agreements permit BOCES' graduates advanced standing when they matriculate in an appropriate program at the college. As noted above, several other colleges have developed similar programs.

Aimed at more talented youth, the early admission programs allow high school seniors to actually get a head start on college by taking freshman-level courses a year early. Advanced standing is more prevalent. It assures students that success in some of their BOCES and high school courses would allow them to begin community college work in advanced courses. An articulation agreement between the school and the college identifies comparable courses. Advantages to students include completing a college program in less time and paying less tuition.

Naturally, the joint program development described above has led to interaction not only between administrators of the institutions involved, but discussion, informal and formal, among teachers. To my mind, herein lies the most valuable thrust of community college and secondary education cooperation. I believe that an important part of the effective response to the *Nation at Risk* report (and others) will result from better communication among teachers, endorsed and encouraged by administrators.

Right now, some of the most useful discussions are in computer literacy, with college professors sharing their knowledge with the secondary instructors. I do not think that computerization is an end-all — it merely reduces the time of some jobs. But community college faculty have been "teaching" teachers in high schools and BOCES across New York for the last couple of years, in order that their secondary colleagues are better prepared to enhance instruction in a variety of subjects with some computer work. The following community colleges already have organized programs in this area: Adirondack, Broome, Clinton, Corning, Dutchess, Fulton-Montgomery, Jamestown and Monroe. The connections are not necessarily computer faculty to computer faculty. Math, science, business and other teachers are meeting with community college computer science professors to learn more, and those involved indicate that the sharing is worthwhile, even essential.

Other examples of faculty interaction stand out. Jamestown and Monroe report that, with their area BOCES, they jointly develop and submit applications for VEA and JTPA grants, respectively. A few community colleges, in anticipation of possible new high school foreign language requirements, see themselves upgrading the teaching of those subjects by training high school instructors. Several community colleges, in response to the above-mentioned articulation agreements, actually co-plan curricula with secondary schools, by hosting joint faculty meetings on campus.

But the area that needs the most attention and holds the greatest potential is that of developmental studies, the teaching of basic reading, writing and computational skills. It is a fact that community colleges and secondary institutions each, according to their respective missions, spend much time with many students teaching basic skills.

We all have seen the finger-pointing, colleges at high schools, high schools at elementary schools, etc., with the accusations that such skills should have been learned at an earlier age. Maybe that's true in some cases, but at community colleges it has always been un-

derstood that, with open enrollment, a certain number of students would require pre-college work before actually attempting college-level credit courses.

A recent television talk show featured a panel of educators discussing the *Nation at Risk* report. One panelist, when asked why so many Americans are illiterate, hit the nail on the head: "We know how to teach people to read and have for years. That's not the problem!" He pointed out that dozens of successful methods for teaching reading (and by implication arithmetic and writing) exist and are deemed effective. The problems relate to the coordination of services, funding and insuring that youth and adults in need of basic skills instruction want to upgrade their education and can easily enroll.

It seems to me that institutional funding, at all levels, is regularly a barrier for the delivery of services, but this dollar difficulty is not an overwhelming obstacle. Federal, state and local funds, for institutions and for prospective students, are generally adequate, but could always be improved.

Raising standards in education and in the workplace (employee illiteracy is very much an issue, too) would force citizens into programs, although "carrots" ought to be linked to such "sticks."

A giant step could be taken in New York, however, to dramatically upgrade the coordination of services. If community colleges and high schools and BOCES encouraged greater interaction among basic skills faculty (as has been done in vocational training and computer literacy) these "bridge" institutions, which tie together youth and adult education, would most likely respond with a positive force far more efficient (and cost effective!) than is currently the case. And although the real business of improving basic skills takes place locally, a statewide emphasis would make the effort more visible, bringing about a better sharing and information and, quite possibly, special funding to enhance the work.

If I were a developmental studies instructor at a community college, the most valuable colleague I could have would be the high school and BOCES instructor who taught the same people earlier. I would want to know what went on at that level, programmatically and individually. I would want to learn from my partner at the secondary level and share my success and failures with him or her. I am sure high school and BOCES teachers would feel similarly about such an arrangement.

The connections between community colleges and secondary institutions are multiplying each year. Directing those connections toward basic skills could result in a massive upgrading of reading and computational ability and, thus, complete a most valuable network for citizen service in New York.

A graduate of the University of Delaware, Dr. Robbins holds the M.Ed. from that institution and the Ed.D. in Educational Administration from the University of Pennsylvania. He has been in his current position since 1975, having served earlier as President of Genesee Community College for five years and as dean at the Community College of Delaware County, Pennsylvania and Ocean County College, New Jersey. In 1972-83, he served SUNY as Acting President at the College at Potsdam. He has served on several statewide and national task forces and committees, including an assignment as Chairman of the National Council of State Directors of Community Colleges in 1981-82.

What if Willy Loman Worked for You?

A proposal to improve business education through the use of literature

by
Paul W. Brennan
Nassau Community College

There is an unfortunate rift running down the center of too many community college campuses. The chasm separates the humanities from the career oriented disciplines. The barrier can divide faculty, as well as students. While the cause of the division are understandable, the consequences may not always be so obvious.

One of the detrimental effects of this traditional separation is the negative impact it has upon the success of business students. "Success" includes both improved performance in all academic areas, as well as greater effectiveness in securing employment and fully developing one's career potential.

Those members of the faculty who counsel business majors are familiar with the inquiry, "Why do I need to know all that stuff?" when they are told they must register for courses in History, Philosophy or Art. The response, "You need it to graduate" does both the discipline and the student a disservice.

How can one write well if one is not familiar with good writing? Whether it's an essay or an advertisement, a thesis or a sales letter, style, theme and the basic rules of grammar are important. ("Winston tastes good like a cigarette should" not withstanding.) Even a casual survey of accounting texts or market research papers will make it abundantly clear that business students do not read enough well written literature within the business curriculum. And the problem does not end with writing.

The basic principles of design, tone and style that are explained in an art appreciation course apply not only to the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel, but also the layout of a magazine and or the golden arches of a certain highly successful fast food marketer. Ethics, emotion, and logic are not the sole preserve of the humanities. The ideas, the approaches, the questions are as much a part of business careers as they are part of a Greek tragedy or English sonnet. Business students do not seem to appreciate that businesses want to hire people who can think clearly and express themselves clearly. Students fail to appreciate how courses in the humanities will improve their ability to measure and solve problems, and that those abilities are highly desirable in an employee.

This is not to say that business area faculty do not see some need for exposure to the humanities. Obviously, colleges require business students to divide their time more or less evenly between major courses and the liberal arts. Even on the graduate level, most business schools make an attempt to provide at least some treatment of ethics, for example, in a Business and Society course, or writing in Business Communications. The problem is not one of content, but one of context.

Content versus context is that old question, "Does spelling count?" Students are wont to make that inquiry in courses outside of Composition 101. As innocent as the question is, it underlines the problem that many students do not see any interrelation between what they learn in one course and a problem that they face in another. This is most especially true between courses in the humanities and business. If students are not taking the skills and values they pick up in one course into their major courses and beyond that into their careers, one must question the point of requiring such courses, or examine ways of demonstrating the value of an interdisciplinary approach to students.

What follows is an examination of one possible strategy for welding the humanities and business closer together. It is hoped that such a intermingling of disciplines will not only produce stronger business

graduates but also lead to more "cross fertilization" between two ends of the campus which normally lead rather separate lives.

Stronger business graduates are graduates who can write clearly and concisely. Survey after survey demonstrates that business managers and personnel directors often identify poor or nonexistant communication skills as major weaknesses among college graduates entering the business world today.

A survey conducted by Dr. Allen Blitstein, a professor of economics at Southwest State University (Minnesota), is just one example. In a study of large and intermediate organizations across the nation, Blitstein asked respondents to "list how important the following factors are in a student obtaining employment, succeeding on the job and receiving promotions: grade point average, oral communication, skills, written communication skills, poise, appearance, social graces, personality, school from which degree was received recommendations."

While poise and oral communication skills ranked first and second, 38.3 percent of the respondents described written communication skills are very important, and 52.2 percent called it important. Only 9.5 percent described written communication skills as not important. When it comes to success on the job, writing skills are judged to be even more important. From his research, Blitstein draws the conclusion: "Establishment of writing clinics, forcing students to take public speaking courses and making written and oral presentations a requirement in many business courses will help the student obtain employment. These measures will also help a person in succeeding on the job and earning a promotion."

Blitstein's observations are not an islocated case. Over the past twenty years there has been a long series of complaints by business managers about a lack of communication skills in recent graduates. Both *Fortune* magazine and Conference Board studies identified communication skills as the most common problem for MBA recruiters.[2]

What can be done to improve the communication skills of business students? As previously noted, students who do not read enough well written material can be expected to be at a disadvantage when they are required to write themselves. Compounding that problem is the inclination in business education for "hard" quantitative material to drive out "soft" qualitative approaches. This, of course, is another inducement for business students to put aside the more qualitative skills that they have been exposed to in the humanities when they face business problems.

What is needed is an educational approach which will not only expose the business student to literature, but which will do so in a contex which will encourage the student to place proper value on both ideas and the style of presentation in that literature. This can be accomplished by integrating literature components into traditional business courses. For example, Sales Management is a course which normally stresses such quantitative topics as forecasting and compensation patterns, often taught through the case study method. Certainly, these are necessary pieces of information for future sales managers. But, how do those cases improve the individual's ability to deal with other kinds of problems that they will meet on the job, problems which require qualitative skills.

The suggested solution is to include within the course curriculum a unit on Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman*. By requiring students to read the play they are, of course, exposed to the power of language in one of America's greatest works. Second, within the context of a serious, "real world" course students can be asked to discuss profound questions that, while set in the business world, transcend that environment and require consideration of universal values.

As S.I. Hayakawa observed, "The study of literature is not merely the idle acquisition of social polish, as practical men are fond of believing, but a necessary means of both increasing our communication with others and of increasing our understanding of what others are trying to communicate to us."[3]

Literature has a place in business education. It is part of the human tradition of recording, exchanging and debating our perceptions of reality, and the perceptions of some of the keenest, most insightful observers of the human scene. Literature helps students deal with the ambiguity of the business world where not every decision can be quantified as much as we would like it to be. Literature encourages the development of minds which are flexible and creative, both assets to the business manager.

Death of a Salesman is a nearly percect piece of literature for injection into a business program. It is short, relatively modern and contains enough information on the purely business side of the conflict for student and teacher to generate a dialogue which will lead to a real understanding of the human condition and its relation to business problems.

What if Willy Loman worked for you? What if this aging, troubled and unproductive man were your employee? Yes, as Miller suggests, society must take notice of men like Willy, but how can sales managers deal with such a problem? What does the company owe Willy? What effect does Willy have on the morale of others in the sporting goods company? How does his performance affect your own job performance and security?

These are "real world" questions that face managers every day. They are as "real" as the world Miller created around Willy. Presented within the context of a business course, students can be expected to develop a greater appreciation for the role of literature in their education and development.

As noted, *Death of a Salesman* lends itself perfectly to the concept of injecting literature into business courses. A suggested criteria for selecting suitable works may be based on the following:

1. Length — The work should be short enough to en-

courage students to read it. No useful purpose is served by driving students to Cliff notes.

2. Age — Works must be modern enough so that students *easily* see the relation and relevance of the work to their careers. Arcane language defeats the cause of improving writing styles as well.
3. Content — The work setting must be central to the theme of the work. Books whose characters are business people at play or outside of the office will not be valuable inside the classroom.

Unfortunately, there are not many works which meet those criteria. This is not to say that American authors have not shown an interest in American business. William Dean Howell's *The Rise of Silas Lapham* and Sinclair Lewis's *Babbitt* are but two examples. Writers such as Norris, Dreiser and London have turned to the businessman as central characters a number of times. Most of these works, however, do not meet the expressed criteria.

Part of the problem may lie in what some see as the natural prejudice many "men of letters" hold against "men of money." Emily Stipes Watts refers to this phenomenon as the "Scrooge Syndrome."[4] This syndrome paints the businessman and business activity as almost inately evil and corrupting. Many writers demonstrate a naivite about business practices. This naivite expresses itself in an attitude which suggests that accumulation of great wealth is really not that difficult a task to accomplish, if a character is given a certain inclination in that direction. Gatsby's wealth apparently didn't require years of toil to create, and certainly its maintenance and management did not require much attention.

To date only one or two possibilities have been uncovered beyond *Death of a Salesman*. Kurt Vonnegut's *Player Piano*[5] has applications in courses in Organizational Behavior and Management. *The Man in the Gray Flannel Suit*,[6] while it certainly has flaws as a novel, raises important issues for management and personnel courses.

There must be other plays, short stories and novels which would lend themselves to the applications discussed here. Perhaps it is time for the English Department to meet with the Marketing Department to explore the possibilities.

Paul W. Brennan is assistant professor of Marketing at Nassau Community College. *This article was developed while he was an Andrew Mellon Fellow at City University of New York during the Spring of 1984. The author would like to express his appreciation to the Community Colleges Project at the CUNY Graduate Center for their cooperation and support.*

FOOTNOTES

[1] Allen Blitstein. "What Employers Are Seeking in Business Graduates," *The Collegiate Forum*, Fall, 1984, p. 7.

[2] Richard Ruch and Ronald Goodman, *Image At The Top*, (New York, 1983), p. 71.

[3] S.I. Hayakawa, *Language in Thought and Action* (New York, 1972), p. 109.

[4] E.S. Watts, *The Businessman in American Literature* (Athens, Georgia, 1982), p. 1.

[5] Kurt Vonnegut, *Player Piano* (New York, 1952).

[6] Sloan Wilson *The Man In The Gray Flannel Suit* (New York, 1955).

Day Care Centers: The Versatile Student Support Service

by
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Day care centers have never been a part of our fairy tales. Norman Rockwell didn't paint children at play in day care and the "Metafamily" of today is markedly different than the stereotypic image of motherhood and family life just a decade ago. As Harold Hodgkinson cogently reflects on today's demographics: "In 1950, the typical American family unit consisted of a working father, a housewife mother, and two or more school-age children. That pattern, which fit over 65 percent of the households in 1950, fits about 17 percent today." (Hodginson, 1983). It is no secret that women are entering and returning to college and work in greater numbers than ever before. The schoolhouse and work place are becoming more common than the family home for women who comprise more than 50 percent of the undergraduate enrollments in higher education.

Labor force participation of mothers has been the highest among single parent families, and, in New York City alone, there are over 100,000 working mothers who are the sole support of their family, raising children under the age of six. (Zigler, 1982). Divorced mothers comprise the majority of single parents in the U.S. and head one of every five families. Just over a decade ago single parent women headed one of every ten families, according to the 1980 census report. In 1980 female-headed families represented the largest segment of poverty families with family incomes only approaching half of the poverty level.

Day care programming is a pragmatic response to the needs of the diverse publics which are served by the community college. "I received a 3.5 in my first semester of courses but I failed my family" claims a competent but guilt-ridden, depressed student-parent and wife. This response often typifies the psychosocial dilemma and conflict encountered by the returning woman adult-learner seeking individual growth and a better position in the marketplace to assist her family survive in an economy reverberating from the tentativeness of unemployment. Day care services are a campus resource that can provide emotional and economic support for the student, her child and her family at a critical moment for each of them. Comunity colleges send powerful messages to students, families and the community when they support or establish day care programs for the returning woman adult learner. That day care centers are an acceptable and valued program, which can play a vital role in assisting students and their families cope with the burdens associated with academic and domestic responsibilities, can bring comfort and security to the student and family of the 80's. Furthermore, the message suggests that the college recognizes that women are capable of completing their studies successfully while a professionally trained staff responds to the needs of her infant or pre-schooler. It asserts to the entire family and community that the returning adult learner with day care age children is not irresponsible when they attend classes or return to work — a powerful and profound statement of affirmation which can be critical to "breaking away" from the cycle of poverty of "making ends meet."

Whether a day care program is considered a worthwhile service largely depends upon the complexion of the population served by the particular college. Community college administrators would do well to consider the versatility and adaptability of day care programming in meeting the needs of the diverse groups which they serve. For example, with little or no impact on program or finances, the day care program can accommodate field placement requirements of those students enrolled in human services programs of study. Also, linkage between college and business can benefit from a community college day care center program which extends its service to company employees thereby

creating a more flexible labor pool to meet local industry manpower needs. Employer-supported child care accounts for less than one percent of all children in day care with only 415 programs reported in the U.S. in 1982. In 1990, over ten million children with mothers in the labor force are projected by the census. In a study of the 415 employers associated with the "National Employer Supported Child Care Project," reduced worker turnover, reduced absenteeism, improved employee recruitment and a better public image were reported by the participating businesses. No company reported adverse effects. (Burud, 1983). As a community service, alumni and other members of the community can benefit from a day care service for their children as well, allowing them to study or work part-time. The advantage of providing day care services for all of these groups can benefit the college in terms of goodwill and the ability to provide access to a population of students who may have otherwise found it difficult to attend classes. What other student support service can respond to the needs of so many constituent groups?

Dutchess Community College began its day care center on campus almost seven years ago after an advisory board of students, faculty and staff identified the need for such a service. Contractual arrangements for the sponsorship of a day care program were made with a faculty-student organization. The organization is a not-for-profit corporation, designed to provide support services which contribute to campus life by providing a food service, bookstore, and day care center program. The college agreed to provide the facilities while the Association hired a well-trained professional staff of a director, teachers and assistant teachers. A curriculum was established, equipment purchased, and, in no time, a full cadre of toddlers and preschoolers joined their mothers and fathers on campus — a memorable and exciting event. From the start seventy children have filled the day care center with a waiting list persisting at all times.

Because of the quality of care provided by a creative and fully committed staff, the reputation and image of the day care program surpassed all expectations. The waiting list of children of students grew, and calls from students and parents in the community needing day care center service indicated the need for expansion. Responding to their needs, another day care center was established in the community at an unused public elementary school located very close to the headquarters of IBM, the primary employer in the college's service area. Shortly after the public announcement of the opening of the community day care program, enrollment figures soared and another waiting list persists. Today, a staff of ten professionals are assisted by a team of student interns, serving about 150 children at the two sites.

Community colleges are in a pivotal position to assist the nation's students and their families access higher education. There are exemplary programs of day care in place which can be easily replicated by skillful and thoughtful administrators. Community colleges can establish the model for industry and community agencies. The enormous potential of day care should be removed from the "back burner" to assist today's student and family in their struggle for improvement and recognition. The day care center is a justifiable response to serving student populations that have been traditionally bypassed by the four year colleges: low-income students, displaced homemakers, and the returning adult learner. The increasing birth rates, the multiple-earner family and the single-parent student population signals the need for careful day care planning on the community college agenda in the 80's.

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Cross-disciplinary Writing: A Function of Faculty Development

by
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Hudson Valley Community College

The deficiencies in literacy from which we suffer as a society, the causes, implications, and remedies, have all been explored, if not exhaustively, at least with enough attention from the media to have given the topic a prominent place in the public mind.

Up till the start of this decade, although the breadth and depth of the problem were fairly well recognized and acknowledged, the response within the higher education community was often spotty. Some institutions attacked the issue head-on with their best resources; others developed programs which seemed designed more to quiet the critics than really address the problem; others accepted isolated individual initiatives as sufficient response; many ignored the problem, if not as a matter of institutional policy, at least as a matter of practical day-to-day concern.

Perhaps the generally slow response of higher education was inevitable, while research, experimentation, and interdisciplinary study brought the issue into sharper focus. It may be that excessive compartmentalization, interdisciplinary jealousy, or professional rivalry contributed to the delay. In any event, the fact is that higher education has at least begun to take up the challenge.

What seems to have marked the change is a conviction at the top levels of college and university that the problem is so great that it demands a top-level response.

This is what happened at Hudson Valley Community College in Troy.

Until becoming President in 1979, Joseph J. Bulmer, Ph.D., had pursued a 23-year career in research and management as a nuclear engineer with General Electric Company. Although he had maintained his ties to academe through the years — as an adjunct professor and as a member of academic/educational committees — he brought to the college presidency a strong sense of the world beyond the classroom. It was this insight, in part which made him especially sensitive to the issue of illiteracy both as a campus issue and a societal problem.

In the summer of 1983, President Bulmer committed Hudson Valley to an organized and college-wide effort to restore literacy to an honored place in the curriculum. He appointed a sixteen-year veteran of the English Department (the author) to develop and coordinate a cross-disciplinary program to improve students' literacy skills through enhanced teaching and learning techniques throughout the curriculum. His expectation was that by focusing resources on the problem and developing vehicles for a solution, the College could begin to attack the matter in the small steps that can eventually lead to a larger success.

Such was the substance of President Bulmer's remarks to administrators and to the faculty in meetings at the start of the Fall 1983 semester. While acknowledging the enormity of the problem — locally and nationally, on campus and off — he encouraged the Hudson Valley community to a hopeful and optimistic effort at developing solutions. The College's response in the months that followed was generous, resourceful, and positive.

As Coordinator of the Cross-Disciplinary Writing Project, I was granted a 75% teaching-load reduction. With the start of the semester, while continuing the library research I had begun in the summer, I started a series of interviews with faculty members in the Sciences and Technologies Divisions of the College; later, the interview schedule was extended into the other Divisions (Business, Community Services, and Liberal Arts).

The interviews were designed both to elicit faculty comment and to present to faculty information and practical suggestions for classroom applications of "writing-in-the-disciplines" theory. In some departments, these interviews were conducted with groups of faculty; in most, however, the interviews were in-

dividual. The heightened awareness resulting from these interviews in the first several weeks of the semester brought the basic aims of the Cross-Disciplinary Writing Project into sharper focus in many quarters on campus. The activity also became a popular topic in casual conversation. Importantly, the interviews provided significant feedback which helped determine the direction of Project activities for the remainder of the year.

In the interview, each faculty member was given a sheet for notes which included the following "Purpose of Interview" statement:

1. To identify writing and speaking assigned to students in courses;
2. In cooperation with the faculty involved, to analyze and evaluate that assigned writing and speaking from the following perspectives:
   a. the course, the curriculum, and the profession
   b. the instructor's technique/methodology and concerns
   c. theories of writing for learning
   d. articulation with the rest of the student's course of study, especially with the composition, speech, and other writing courses;
3. To discuss: areas of possible refinement; other applications; and the role of the Cross-Disciplinary Writing Project on campus.

In addition to fostering directness in the exchange, this device provided a means for note-taking by both of us involved in the interview. It also served later as a reminder to the faculty member of what we had discussed. My copies of these sheets allowed me to review and compile findings on a regular basis.

Results of the interviewing process were quick in coming. Less than a month into the semester, some faculty in the Sciences and Technologies Divisions had begun using some of the "learning-by-writing" exercises I had discussed with them, particularly Clarifying Statements (see Endnote).

By early October, we had generated enough positive response to have the nucleus of a team for the next month's conference on "Writing in Post-Secondary Occupational Education" sponsored by the Two-Year College Development Center of the State University at Albany. That interdisciplinary team, over the months that followed, became a significant guiding element in the Project's activities.

In the course of the first semester, in addition to the direct benefits of having writing restored, refined, or begun as a learning activity in classes ranging from Machine Processes to Surveying to Chemistry, we also witnessed the enthusiasm that greeted the effort of the Liberal Arts making a gesture across the disciplines. Many perceived a rich reciprocal potential in this outreach. (Such had been among President Bulmer's expectations for the Project). And the resulting conversations and interchanges across the disciplines helped refine the direction of the Project in the second semester.

One major activity in the second semester was the publication at two- or three-week intervals of a single-fold 8½ x 11 sheet called "Learning By Writing" (see Endnote). Each issue contained a "theory" section outlining a principle of "writing in the disciplines" or discussing teachers' experiences, and a "practice" section detailing a particular exercise or device instructors might use to apply "learning-by-writing" techniques for the benefit of students in their courses.

The brochures were generally well received. They generated further discussion of the Project's goals. And they served to encourage an ever-widening participation by faculty in Project activities. The variety of techniques presented in the brochures and the strength of the testimony of those who have found the practice of "learning by writing" indispensable provided a broad cross-disciplinary appeal. Across the entire spectrum of the College's curriculum, various instructors applied the techniques; almost all of those participating reported the results highly satisfactory from both teachers' and students' points of view.

Another major activity for the Project in the second semester was the sponsorship of a day-long conference for faculty in April. This event, developed by a small group including the Director of the College's Writing Lab and the interdisciplinary team mentioned earlier, was organized through the College's Office of Human Resources. It was funded by grants from the Two-Year College Development Center and Hudson Valley's Faculty/Administrators Development Committee. The program included addresses by Gail Hearn, Ph.D., author and active participant with Elaine Maimon in the Beaver College (PA) NEH Writing Across the Curriculum Project, and by Edward M. Malloy, Ph.D., Deputy Director of the Office of International Development of the United States Department of State. Also included in the day's events were workshop demonstrations and small-group activities led by Dr. Hearn. The major topics addressed were: Writing Across the Curriculum; Responding to Student Writing; Designing Writing Assignments; Collaborative Learning; and Interdisciplinary Concerns in Issues of Science, Technology, and Human Development.

Classes were cancelled for the day. Faculty attendance at the conference was voluntary. Off-campus professional meetings prevented faculty from two departments from attending the conference, but over one-third of the College's full-time faculty chose to participate in the day's activities. Interestingly, the event attracted faculty members from the Sciences and Technologies Division in far greater proportion than their number on the faculty would suggest.

The practicality of the day's activities was the feature given the most favorable comment. What seemed most relevant to those attending and what received the highest marks was the workshop session on "Responding to Student Writing." Faculty members seemed particularly pleased to have had the opportunity to participate in a discussion of this aspect of their work with their colleagues in different disciplines.

In addition to the curriculum development activities represented by the "Learning By Writing" brochures and the Faculty Conference Day, the second semester also saw less ambitious undertakings succeed. One of these was a joint effort with a member of the Chemistry Department in presenting a short program to a regional teachers' group on some uses of writing in the teaching of chemistry. Another was the exploration of alternatives to formal courses in technical writing for students in non-degree programs.

Preliminary steps were also taken in the second semester toward the formation of a Task Force to assure the pursuit of the Project's goals in future semesters. With the return of the Coordinator to full-time teaching, the interdisciplinary Task Force will provide on-going impetus for the program. The brochure series will continue under the aegis of the Task Force; further faculty development activities are also planned; and the Task Force will offer a forum for cross-disciplinary discussion of the goals and practice of learning by writing.

A year-end survey of the faculty revealed that Project activities over the course of the two semesters had directly impacted the teaching styles and techniques of about one-fourth of the College's instructors. Although many indicated they planned to wait until the new academic year to incorporate or refine learning-by-writing activities in their courses, a great number of faculty responded that they had already implemented suggestions brought to their attention through the Project. (Informal corroboration of this came to a physics instructor who overheard one of his students complain to a classmate: "What's happened to this place? Everybody's making us write!"

Favorable comments in the year-end evaluation survey gave evidence of substantial faculty support for extension of Project activities beyond the first year. In addition, the Middle States Team which made its accreditation visit to the campus in March explicitly recommended that the program be continued.

With ever wider recognition not only as a valid means of learning but as a vehicle nonpareil for student mastery of subject matter throughout the curriculum, writing will emerge as a standard classroom technique to rank with listening, discussion, reading, memorization, recitation, etc., on the path to learning. Perhaps it would be fairer to say that writing will re-emerge, that it will resume its old role. The demand for this restoration will likely come not so much from teachers of composition or rhetoric, from those whose concentration already falls almost exclusively on writing, but from content area teachers, themselves. Evidence that this has already begun to happen on many campuses may be gleaned from the educational journals in a number of fields.

As it is fair to conclude that the artificial separation of writing from the content courses helped bring on the national literacy crisis in the first place, it is similarly reasonable to expect that the restoration of writing to a significant role in such courses will contribute substantially to the resolution of the crisis. The role of higher education in the process is considerable, if not universally agreed on.

College and university have produced the research and theoretical guidance for endeavors aimed at attacking the literacy problem in business, industry, and government. It is in the college and university, too, that model programs in cross-disciplinary writing for elementary and secondary school students have found their initial impetus and motivation.

Without abandoning its position as adviser, support, and guide in the campaign for literacy in society, higher education is adapting itself to a role in partnership with other agents in the strategy. One of its special contributions lies precisely in the restoration of writing as a respected and competently employed technique of learning in all subjects. The more fully higher education and its practitioners come to realize and implement the implications of this principle, the more directly will they contribute to the success of the effort.

A year of concentrated activity in this direction has brought a large proportion of the Hudson Valley community a considerable distance along the path envisioned by President Bulmer. Recognizing that the restoration of literacy to an honored place in the curriculum is an institutional goal, many teaching faculty have renewed it as one of their own principal goals. The result promises to be two-fold: enhanced student literacy; and, perhaps more important, better learning.

ENDNOTE

(The following sample illustrates the type of material presented in the brochures. This is an explanation of Clarifying Statements and their uses.)

Many instructors have found "Clarifying Statements" a useful first effort in applying learning-by-writing techniques in their classrooms.

Clarifying Statements are writing exercises which direct student attention in short spurts to important aspects of the lesson under consideration. By focusing attention on specific points in a lesson and by concentrating writing strategies (organization, coherent expression, etc.) on the topic, the student strengthens his or her ability to grasp and retain lesson elements.

Clarifying Statements are written in class. Although as much as ten minutes may sometimes be allotted to the exercise, three to five minutes are ideal in many cases. Instructors will often want to collect these short writings to get a "reading" on the class, but papers should remain ungraded: the real value of Clarifying Statements lies in what they can do to help students learn by writing.

The following examples are written in the "statement completion" format but can easily be converted to question format if that is preferred.

A. At the start of an activity or class (to focus attention on a topic to be covered):

"I see the relationship between _____ (today's topic) and _____ (a concept or topic studied previously) as . . . . "

"Right now, my definition of the term _____ is . . . . "

B. During class (to renew attention or to clarify what students may or may not be grasping):

"The instructor's explanation of _____ (topic under study) is/was clear — or unclear — to me because . . . . "

"The important features of _____ (topic under study; or a piece of equipment just described) are . . . . "

"The most important uses of _____ (some technique or piece of equipment) are . . . . "

C. At the end of class/week/unit (to encourage students to summarize and evaluate their own learning):

"The three most important points I've heard in class today (this week, etc.) are . . . . "

"The most difficult things for me this week (in this unit, in understanding _____) were . . . "

"The instructor's main points in today's lesson were . . . . "

James Early, since 1967 a teacher of freshman composition at Hudson Valley Community College, now also serves as the part-time Coordinator of the College's Cross-Disciplinary Writing Project. He holds a Master's degree in English from the College of St. Rose, Albany; he has also studies extensively in the graduate program in Communication and Rhetoric at RPI, Troy. In 1982, his work on developing grammar exercises for computer-aided instruction was partially funded by an award from the Faculty Grants for the Improvement of Undergraduate Instruction. A native of Schenectady, Professor Early resides with his family in Waterford.

Human Ecology: Liberal Arts for the Future

by
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M. Thomas Cooper, Dean of Art/Humanities Division
Human Ecology Program
Monroe Community College

Within the panoply of higher education, community colleges have emerged as the most dynamic, flexible, and promising source of curriculum renewal. The community college has offered a second chance to those seeking upward mobility, job retraining, and open access to employment. And the community college has created transfer opportunities for thousands of students who would never have pursued programs leading to baccalaureate degrees. As part of this tradition of innovation, Monroe Community College is experimenting with a new kind of contemporary liberal arts degee that will prepare our students for the Twenty-First Century.

Our Human Ecology Concentration in Liberal Arts melds humanities, social science, environmental sciences, and technology and is founded on three concepts: the need for technological literacy for liberal arts students (as defined by the Sloan Foundation); second, the need for global awareness and a sense of environmental stewardship (as developed in *The Global 2000 Report* and endorsed by New York State's Board of Regents); and third, the need for "connectedness" among the various disciplines of learning (as defined by Boyer and Levine in *A Quest for Common Learning*).

Post-secondary education must contribute to the transformation of values, acquisition of new knowledge, and development of new skills implicit in fulfilling such goals. We must help citizens adapt to changing concepts of work and leisure, emerging pressures for a sustainable relationship to the environment and alternative modes of learning, self-discovery, and independence. Because of their responsiveness to local communities and curricular flexibility, community colleges are in a unique position to meet this educational challenge.

FUNDING

That, in essence, is what we said when a Task Force headed by three divisional deans and including several dozen faculty supporters approached The Fund For the Improvement of Post-Secondary Education with a grant application. We'd already held several public forums and workshops and participated in the "Energy and the Way We Live" program. But the Task Force concluded that a full-scale academic program was needed to bring these early efforts to fruition. We asked for a three year grant of $190,000 to pay for faculty release time (to develop and research courses, attend seminars, meet weekly, and truly create an interdisciplinary team) and to pay for alternative energy equipment (an electric-generating windmill and solar collection devices), consultants and speakers, and secretarial support. Rejected once, Human Ecology was funded on the second try, one of only 60 of the over 2300 applying institutions nationwide and one of only six community colleges funded. FIPSE hoped we would break ground and serve as a model for other community and four-year colleges.

As far as we know, MCC is the only community college in the nation developing a comprehensive program in Human Ecology: a program designed with rigorous requirements in Mathematics, Science, and Humanities so students can readily transfer to a variety of four-year programs in Liberal Arts and Sciences; yet a program based on the premise that students must be aware of the ecological, ethical, and technological challenges facing a citizen of the Twenty-First Century. Our flexible delivery system will make the courses accessible as electives to full and part-time students in career and technical fields as well.

Our first class of 25 will graduate in June of 1985. Already over 180 students have enrolled in the five

newly developed courses. Some of our graduates plan to seek employment in energy-related careers, some will continue their human ecology studies at the dozen four-year colleges nationally that offer such programs (e.g. Cornell University and The College of the Atlantic), some will pursue more traditional majors with their MCC Human Ecology degree as a basis for a holistic perspective, and still others will apply the skills and values immediately in their lives. The range of expressed interests include homesteading, environmental design, home construction, entrepreneurship, teaching, and business careers in related areas.

Twenty faculty members and administrators from eighteen academic and administrative departments are working on the project. A twelve member community advisory committee has been formed, community symposiums have included distinguished energy/ecology/futurist experts like Amory and Hunter Lovins (*Soft Energy Paths*), Michael Marien (editor of *Future Survey*), and Anne LaBastille (*Woodswoman*).

THE CURRICULUM

MCC's curriculum was developed under the assumption that as many courses as possible be given to existing departments rather than tossed into the limbo of interdisciplinary offerings. We felt this would improve transferability, offer departments a share of parenthood rather than threaten them with competition, and increase the likelihood of infusing Human Ecology ideas into other faculty members.

Along with courses in writing and math and a traditional distribution of electives, the curriculum we ended up with has three basic components: courses studying Spaceship Earth, courses integrating technologies and humanities, and courses developing self-reliance skills.

The Spaceship Earth courses aim to develop a sense of global interaction. "Physical Geography," a geology course, emphasizes climate, resources, and vegetation in relation to man's activities. "The Human Environment," a biology course, studies the interaction of ecology, pollution, radiation effects, and man. "Global Interdependence," a social science course, emphasizes the cultural, social, and ethical networks of planet Earth.

Almost every respected researcher into the near future predicts that if present trends continue, in 25-50 years there won't be enough food, shelter, clean water, or raw resources for our overpopulated plane. The *Global 2000 Report* prepared by a Presidential Commission and using all available governmental departments and records, said we will almost certainly extinguish 20% of all our fellow species on the plane by the year 2000. The United States and the Soviets trade rain clouds every twelve hours while threatening each other with nuclear bombs. More people are malnourished today than would have populated the earth in 1650. More people will be malnourished in the year 2000 than populated the earth in the year 1940.

Some of these problems are excruciatingly complex, while others simply require awareness or individual effort. As Dr. Amory Lovins told one Human Ecology audience at MCC, "the U.S. can become energy self-sufficient in five years — just by plugging holes and not driving petro-pigs." No person in the year 2000 -- and all students born this year will enter college after the year 2000 — will be educated without understanding the operating principles of Spaceship Earth.

In addition to having students study technology in a recommended computer course and the required courses in shelter and energy (discussed below), students also must take three courses that related technology to human concerns. "Technology and Values," a philosophy course, examines the way technology and values shape each other and the historical evolution of man's view of technology. "Technology and Literature," an English course, examines the promises and perils of technology and its influence on the imagination as seen in works of literature. "The Individual in Society," a social science course, studies the impact of technology, biological imperatives, and social change on individualism and freedom. These courses aim to reduce the mutual fear/suspicion between technologies and humanities, but at a deeper level attempt to reintegrate man and machine. We operate on the premise that technology is an extension of the human brain, neither an alien presence nor an independent entity with laws apart from human values.

In the courses, students examine how human values are implicit in our technologies and discover alternative technologies with alternative value systems. The Appropriate Technology movement, for instance, says human values are best served by technology which is small-scale, diverse, easy to fix and understand by its owner, and uses renewable energy. Most modern technology, by contrast, tends to be large-scale, centralized, understood only by experts, and relies on non-renewable resources. It's the difference between heating one's home with passive solar or with a gas/oil furnace or electricity generated by a nuclear power station. Authors like Helen Fisher (*The Sex Contract*), E.F. Schumacher (*Small is Beautiful*), and Tracy Kidder (*Soul of the New Machine*) who explore these issues are read in these courses.

Are technology and nature opposed? Is individualism in our evolutionary heritage and can it withstand — flourish? — amid modern technology? How can we make the marvelous wealth and imagination of modern technology serve human needs rather than make humans serve it? To answer these questions, humanists must be technologically literate and technologists must be ethically literate.

Third, the perhaps the most innovative aspect of MCC's Human Ecology curriculum, are five Self-Reliance courses: "Health for Life," a self-health course which includes the concept of wellness and mental reinforcements to physical health and which replaces the physical education requirement; "Applied Energy

Systems," a physics course which examines alternative energy technologies with hands-on applications; "Energy-Efficient Home Design," a mechanical technology course emphasizing owner-built, hands-on shelter design; "Self-Reliance," a humanities course that integrates philosophical inquiry with hands-on self-reliance projects; and the "Human Ecology Practicum," in which students work one semester as in intern — for instance, as a reporter on an environmental newspaper, with a solar architect, or on an organic farm.

The courses stem from Emerson's idea of the practical scholar as expressed in his "American Scholar" essay. Emerson reminds us a scholar must take knowledge from three sources: Nature, Books, and Action — and not just from books or, as he said, "instead of Man thinking, we get the bookworm." The self-reliance courses attempt to us hands as well as heads to create a more complete educational experience. The self-reliance courses also suggest concrete answers for the resource and ecological problems raised by the Spaceship Earth courses and for the threats to freedom and ethics raised by the technology evaluation courses.

By learning to rely on themselves more, students quell the spectre of *1984*'s Big Brother. By weakening central control of food and energy supplies they increase individual empowerment. Awareness of conserving lifestyles also reduces the drain on world resources. We hope by emphasizing outwardly simple and inwardly rich lifestyles, that we will contribute to the quality of our students' lives. Our not-so-disguised moral principle might be said this way: a person pays his way in life by what he is or does, not by what he has.

Students in "Self-Reliance" have built cold frames, solar collectors, a dome greenhouse, organic gardens, food dehydrators, and insulating window shades. They've also done human experiments in self-reliance. One student wrote and performed his own play; another conducted her own divorce suit from county clerk to summonses to court without a lawyer. There have been foraging expeditions, class barter sessions, creative recycling projects, meatless cooking demonstrations. Students are more creative when they explore knowledge they *want* to have. We try to make projects examples of practical problem solving, involving both skills and intellect, hands and head. Students evaluate projects for human meaning and in many cases teach the class what they've learned. We won't pretend a few bluffers don't sneak in, but there seem to be fewer than in other classes. No term paper ever dies so obvious a death as a row of poorly cared-for seedlings.

The ACT project calls for discovering new rules to deal with a changing world and concurs with Dr. Lewis Thomas, the noted biologist, that "if this century does not slip forever through our fingers, it will be because learning will have directed us away from our splintered dumbness and will have helped us focus on our goals." In formulating our mission we found that the interdisciplinary teaching faculty and the administration of the college had no common language. Job training, FTE's marketing, and Emerson did not translate into common vernacular. However, we did find a commonality in the search for the connectedness of ideas rather than the "splintered dumbness" of apathy or evasion of environmental concerns. In essence, we intend to shape a liberal studies curriculum that unites artist, social scientist, and technologist — a course of studies that we call Liberal Arts for the Twenty-First Century.

M. Garrett Bauman, Coordinator of the Human Ecology Program at Monroe Community College, writes frequently for The Chronicle of Higher Education, *and has published stories and essays in* Yankee, Greensboro Review, Organic Gardening, Community College Review, College English, *and other journals. Mr. Bauman has received writing awards from The State University of New York and from Brigham Young University. He is working with students and other faculty members this year to construct a solar-heated "Habitat" building that will house the Human Ecology Program at Monroe Community College.*

Professor M. Thomas Cooper teaches English, art history and an interdisciplinary Honors Seminar in the Humanities. His academic background includes a Bachelor of Arts and Master of Arts from the University of Rochester, a Master of Science in English Education from The SUNY College at Geneseo, a Doctor of Philosophy in Humanities from Syracuse University, and several graduate courses from Cornell University in Industrial Labor Relations. He has been the recipient of two NEH grants: one to study Contemporary American Writing, the other to investigate the influence of Mies Van der Rohe on American architecture. In 1978 he was selected as the college's "distinguished teaching professor" and currently serves on the advisory board of the New York State Community College General Education Association and the research committee of the Community College Humanities Association. He was the project director for the Alternative and Creative Energy *project from 1982-84 and Dean of the Arts/Humanities Division at Monroe Community College from 1977-1984.*

The Learning Disabled Student in the Community College

by
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Given the increase since 1975 in educational services for "exceptional children" — instruction which meets the unique needs of disabled students — throughout elementary and secondary school, and the "open admissions" policies, especially in the liberal arts, of most state community colleges, it is likely that instructors will encounter disabled students in their classes. It is therefore important for us to be aware of the sorts of programs that have been available to these students prior to college entrance so that there can be come continuity between their high school and college educational experiences. It is essential that college instructors become sensitive to the background and needs of disabled students; college must not become the proverbial revolving door for them.

First, we should know something about the Education for all Handicapped Children Act, 1975 (Public Law 94-142) which, paralleling civil rights activism, assured educational rights to handicapped children. By law such students as the learning disabled, the visually impaired, the emotionally disturbed are guaranteed a meaningful education, one which can help them reach their fullest potential. The basic components of the law, in sum, are as follows:

1. child identification — state must submit plan for screening and identifying handicapped children
2. full support services, e.g. speech therapy, psychological counseling, at no cost to parents
3. due process — child and parents have right to information and informed consent before child is evaluated, labeled, or placed, and impartial hearing must take place where there is disagreement
4. parent consultation throughout
5. least restrictive environment — child must be educated within the least restrictive environment consistent with his/her educational needs and, in so far as possible, with non-handicapped children — mainstreaming
6. IEP — written, individualized education program for every handicapped child, proposed by special education teacher and approved by parents; program must take into consideration present level of functioning, long term, short term goals, services that are to be provided, dates for implementation, methods for evaluation
7. non-discriminatory testing — tests in child's native language
8. confidentiality
9. personnel development

With the support systems available to them, the close cooperation between teachers and parents and child, and the individualized instruction afforded by the IEP, it is not surprising that many disabled students who, before 1975, might not have been able to complete secondary education are now seeing college education. However, the world of college is far less attentive to their individual needs than that of high school; they persevere, nevertheless.

Perhaps the disabled student whom college instructors are most likely to encounter is one with a "learning disability." In 1981, the National Joint Committee on Learning Disabilities drafted a definition of learning disabilities:

> Learning disabilities is a generic term that refers to a heterogeneous group of disorders manifested by significant difficulties in the acquisition and use of listening, speaking, reading, writing, reasoning or mathematical abilities. These disorders are intrinsic to the individual and are presumed to be due to central nervous system dysfunction.
>
> Even though a learning disability may occur concomitantly with other handicapping conditions (e.g., sensory impairment, mental retardation, social and emotional disturbance) or environmental influences (e.g. cultural differences, insufficient/inappropriate instruction, psycho-

genic factors), it is not the direct result of those conditions or influences (Meyen, 31).

It is important to note that students with learning disabilities have normal intelligence; their disabilities are the result of a breakdown in the learning process that creates a gap between potential and performance. They *can* learn if instructors are flexible enough to accomodate to a learning style that differs from "the norm." To dismiss such students as slow, lazy, careless, or badly behaved is to abdicate our responsibility to — at least attempt — to teach them in an educationally meaningful way.

Given students at the college level with learning disabilities, what can we do? Whether the students are officially labeled or not, that is whether they have chosen to identify themselves on their college applications and to register with the college's Office for Disabled Students (if there is one) or not, we, their instructors are faced with disabilities in the classroom; we are charged with helping students progress through the tiers of their education so that they may realize their intellectual potential. We must remember that the difficulty is the result of a physical impairment which has led to a disability in carrying out the functions of the classroom. Ideally, if we can modify our methods, the disability need not become a "handicap."

Of course, there is no "right method," but continuing to aim at the "least restrictive environment" for the student is basic; the student must be encouraged as much as possible to continue in the mainstream so that, ultimately, he/she can be as productive a member of society as possible. Thus, even though we might recommend tutoring in a writing center, or by a specialist, if one is available, or counseling in a career development center, we must attend to the student's individual needs as well as we can within the regular classroom — even as we attempt to maintain college standards. This does not preclude assessment of the student's strengths and weaknesses, which can be fathered from placement tests, writing samples and the like. It does mean motivating students with difficulties my proceeding from their strengths since "error-based" teaching or overwhelming them all at once with tasks they can not possibly perform will only lead to discouragement and frustration. It means a lot of encouragement and pep talks and positive reinforcement for work well done. It also means after-class, point-by-point directions about assignments — that have already been written clearly on the board and explained in class. And it means allowing extra time for these assignments to be completed.

More specifically, wherever possible, dealing with learning disabled students involves a process-oriented, step-by-step approach to the material to be learned. Students can then concentrate on the areas that are most troublesome to them and develop strategies for coping with them. Students with the same weakness might work together, providing each other with support. Flexibility in topic choices for writing assignments is also desirable since students will be able to write better about things that interest them. This does not mean that the instructor will not direct the student into areas that will satisfy the demands of the curriculum and/or exit exam through skillful "brainstorming" with the student or rehearsal of ideas to get the student started. And if a truly dysfunctioning student, after due remediation can not *write* a final essary or essay exam, it is not unreasonable for him/her to dictate it to a tutor or read it into a tape recorder. Needless to say, a warm, open, non-punitive classroom environment will allow not only students with learning disabilities but all students to flourish.

Finally, as educators, we must be aware of attitudes and values which are conducive to the development and success of disabled students. We all know that some sort of labeling is necessary for program funding, if funding is available on the college level, but such labeling is not instructionally relevant. Placing students in neatly labeled cubby holes and then excusing ourselves for not being able to teach them is "copping out." If we call ourselves humanists, our approaches must be humanistic. We must assess and respect individual differences, for we are dealing with unique human beings. We can not moan and groan when some students do not reflect a preconceived notion of "the college student." People learn differently, and it is up to us as teachers to be sensitive to their various learning styles as well as their individual strengths and weaknesses. Obviously, it is easier to have one "plan" for everyone, rather than, ideally, one "plan" for each student, but if we want to call ourselves "good teachers," we have got to attend to "good teaching." That means recognizing the uniqueness of each person in our classes and trying to encourage his/her progression to the highest educational goal he/she can reach.

Professor Beck began teaching at Nassau Community College in 1974, as Director of the Writing Workshop. Her interest in remediation had begun earlier at Queens College, CUNY, where she had worked with remedial students during open admissions. Professor Beck's interest in disabled students seems a natural outgrowth of these experiences.

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The Classroom Connection: An Early Intervention Model

by
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Linda Linville, Assistant Professor, Learning Skills Center
Broome Community College

Four years ago the Learning Skills Center at Broome Community College developed a drop-in assistance program for reading and study skills. Like many institutions, we hoped that such a program would become a vital connection between the center and the student in the classroom. While some did benefit from one-to-one study skills instruction, we did not feel we were fully realizing our goal.

We found two major factors contributing to this deficiency. The program did not provide instructors with a practical way to assess the causes of students' poor classroom performance. As a result, only a small number of those needing help were referred to the center. Also the LSC staff tended to present general study skills instruction which did not directly relate to the students' course content. Consequently, students did not see immediate, tangible rewards.

In order to overcome these deficiencies, we designed an early intervention, diagnostic-prescriptive model to be mutually administered by the instructor and the LSC support personnel. As a result of using this model in conjunction with the existing drop-in program, students now see immediate rewards from sessions. We hear fewer complaints such as, "But I still don't understand Chapter 5. Where's the payoff in this?" In addition, the direct working relationship established between the LSC staff and instructors has increased referrals and the use of classroom materials for remediation.

DEVELOPING THE MODEL

Our model was initially developed as part of a campus-based research grant. We established three components to the model: a group informal reading inventory for diagnosis, a prescriptive analysis sheet, and a three-party remediation contract. These tools were developed for use in general psychology classes. We targeted psychology for several reasons:

1. The text, *Introduction to Psychology* by Dennis Coon, is well organized and written.
2. General Psychology is frequently taken by freshmen.
3. The terminology and concept load of the course presents serious problems for many students.
4. Department members were interested in learning theory and incorporated study skills into their course work.

Diagnosis

The course textbook served as the basis for the group informal reading inventory. The inventory is an open-book, silent reading test which focuses upon a representative chapter. Questions are designed to measure students' basic reading and cognitive skills.

We used the tenth chapter, "Memory," for our inventory. We felt it was ideal for use in an early intervention model because it is frequently taught at the beginning of the semester. Also, we wanted to use the principles of memory as the rationale for study techniques.

Our first task in developing the test was to identify the cognitive and reading skills essential for the study of psychology. Using Sander's taxonomy, we established five cognitive levels, ranging from translation to formal reasoning. We delineated seven reading skills: vocabulary, classification, graph reading, main idea, comparison/contrast, cause/effect and logic. Each of these was to be tested at one or more of the cognitive levels.

We then began the process of writing test items. We both wrote a minimum of five items for each skill so that validity and reliability could be determined. Poor items were deleted by mutual consent. The first version which resulted from this process contained seventy-three questions.

We field tested two versions of the instrument. Over 160 students were used in this process, and analysis of the results yielded a split-half reliability coefficient of .79. A comparison of raw scores and final course grades indicated a correlation coefficient of .51. Finally, all test items were screened for their power to discriminate proficient readers from deficient readers.

We selected twenty-eight items for the final instrument, which could be administered in a 40-50 minute session. We eliminated two cognitive levels and two reading skills because of item difficulty and intercorrelation of subskills. Figure 1 shows a breakdown of the cognitive levels and reading skills of the final version. Sample test items are shown in Figure 2.

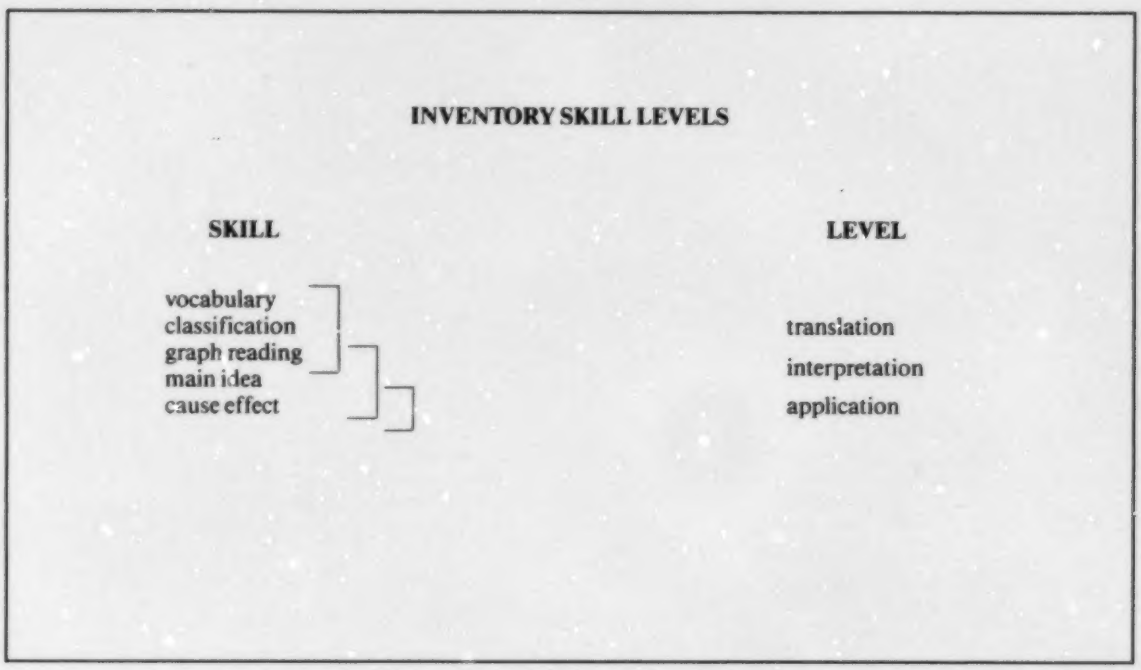


Figure 1

The psychology inventory tests five reading skills at three taxonomical levels.

SAMPLE INVENTORY ITEMS

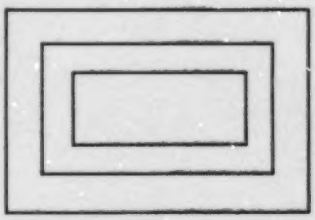
Vocabulary (Translation):

The second paragraph on page 208 begins with "The statements above. . ." The word *symptoms* as it is used in this paragraph means

a. abnormalities
b. signs
c. outcomes
d. feelings
e. amounts

Classification (Translation):

Label the following diagram by choosing the correct term for each category box. Darken the corresponding letter after the appropriate number on your answer sheet.



a. recognition
b. memory measures
c. limited cues
d. redintegration

Graph Reading (Interpretation):

Based upon figure 10-9, page 219, as the hours after learning increase, the difference between the percent remembered when asleep and the percent remembered when awake:

a. decreases
b. increases
c. stays the same
d. approaches 0%
e. increases then decreases

Main Idea (Interpretation):

The first paragraph on page 213 begins with "Generally speaking most. . ." The main idea of this paragraph is:

a. Herman Ebbinghaus showed that cramming material can be beneficial to the memorizing process
b. cramming is a good technique only if you haven't learned enough in the first place
c. cramming as a review technique befor a test will most likely counteract the immediate sharp drop in the curve of forgetting
d. the forgetting curve eventually levels off to a slow decline
e. every student should determine his rate of forgetting on the forgetting curve

Cause and Effect (Interpretation):

The refrigerated cockroaches performed better in the maze because

a. the maze was lighted for them
b. they were not tired from extended activity
c. they had previously practiced the maze
d. cold brain cells function more efficiently
e. interference was minimal

Cause and Effect (Application):

A prisoner has been imprisoned in solitary confinement with no outside communication for 45 years. He is now being released and has decided to learn about microcomputers. Which concept in the chapter would most likely explain his ability to learn and easily retain information about microcomputers without a great deal of interference?

a. redintegration
b. retroactive inhibition
c. proactive inhibition
d. eidetic imagery
e. retrograde amnesia

Figure 2

The final instrument consists of 28 items which can be answered on a computer scorable answer sheet.

Prescription

The second component of the model was designed as a prescriptive analysis sheet. We defined and identified the skills and cognitive levels of each inventory item for the student. The sheet was constructed so that the student could be actively involved in assessing his/her strengths and weaknesses. Several minor format changes were made as a result of field testing.

Remediation

The final component of the model, the three-party remediation contract, was a logical outgrowth of the prescriptive analysis sheet. We designed a working document from which the student could choose activities for remediation of his of her skill needs. We explained generally each activity and the type of assistance available from the instructor and the LSC staff. We included sections for the LSC member to verify that activities were completed and for the instructor to award points for the remediation efforts.

USING THE MODEL

The group informal inventory is administered during the second week of the semester so that intervention can begin as soon as possible. Prior to administration of the test, the student has been given ample time to read the chapter. The instructor carefully explains the purpose of the test, assuring students that the results will be used constructively. With the text as a reference, students have fifty minutes to answer the twenty-eight items on a computer scorable answer sheet.

The following week each student receives a print-out which analyzes his/her performance based on the following information: items missed, answer chosen, correct answer and a Z score. The student transposes this data to the prescriptive analysis sheet. The instructor explains the significance of the reading skills and the cognitive levels as they related to learning the specific discipline of psychology. Emphasizing strengths as well as weaknesses, the instructor sets a criterion referenced standard of 60% correct for each skill.

Those students with deficiencies then meet with the instructor to contract for remediation. This process is shared by the LSC staff and the course instructor. Students earn a small number of total course points toward their final grade for successful remediation. Some skills are developed using solely course materials. Vocabulary expansion and graph reading skills are taught by the instructor, using current test passages. Skills such as classification and main idea are taught by the LSC. To introduce a skill, students work with controlled, simplified exercises. Eventually they are broght to the point of outlining and underlining in the text. Appointments are scheduled several days prior to quizzes and tests so that instruction can be applied as review. Often other study skills are introduced, and students opt to continue sessions beyond their contractual agreement.

CONCLUSION

Based upon two years of classroom use, we feel the diagnostic-prescriptive model is helping us to provide appropriate, relevant basic skills instruction through content areas. The system establishes a direct working relationship and fosters a sense of connectedness among the LSC, instructors and students.

We have also benefited from the experience of designing and refining the model. Through this lengthy process, we have more clearly defined our roles and analyzed the basic cognitive dynamics of psychology. As a result it is easier to develop and integrate concepts for the student in both the classroom and the LSC.

Encouraged by our initial success, a second model is being designed for use in general biology. We are also investigating the possibility of designing longer subtests for such skills as graph reading and classification which could be used by instructors who wish to focus upon one specific skill. We expect our diagnostic-prescriptive intervention model to be useful in a variety of curricula because it is effective and high adaptable.

Charles Croll is currently a full professor in the Psychology Department at Broome Community College. In addition he is the coordinator and intern supervisor of the college's Mental Health and Retardation Program. Professor Croll has been at Broome Community College for 17 years and has been named as outstanding teacher of the year on three occasions. Most recently (1983) he had a cognitive diagnostic test published by West Publishing Compnay in conjunction with a leading introductory psychology text. Professor Croll has a B.A. from The University Center at Binghamton and a M.S. from The College at Oneonta.

Linda Linville is an Assistant Professor in the Learning Skills Center of Broome Community College. She teaches developmental reading and study skills courses. In addition, she is Coordinator of the LSC Peer Tutoring Program. Ms. Linville received her B.A. from Keuka College and an M.Ed. from the University of Florida.

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Computer-Assisted Instruction in Writing: The Freshman Composition Research Paper Assignment and Donald Davis' Topoi

by
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Approximately one-third of Westchester Community College's incoming freshmen, judged not ready for college-level writing, are placed in Writing Workshop, a non-credit remedial course. These students, as well as many of our students in Composition and Literature courses, need individualized tutorial instruction, but budget constraints often preclude the availability of such help. More and more studies confirm, however, that the microcomputer is an effective tool for tutorial instruction in writing, one whose full potential remains to be realized. Its success applies not only to drill and practice, but more importantly to individualized and classroom instruction in the pre-writing and editing stages of easy writing.

Psychologist J.P. Guilford has termed as "convergent"[1] the kind of thinking which seeks a single correct response, whereas the activities involved in writing an essay, especially in the pre-writing or invention stage, are much more characteristic of "divergent"[2] thinking, open-ended in its search for a variety of solutions to a problem, in its quest for new discoveries, surprises and unusual connections. Unfortunately, most of the English programs currently on the market are drill and practice programs used for teaching spelling, vocabulary, grammar and sentence building, and while they help students to learn the basics, they encourage convergent thinking. As William Wresch and others have pointed out, drill and practice programs present line after line of data without consideration for student error, for subject background, for excitement or for divergent thinking. Indeed, a major evaluation of computer-assisted instruction (CAI) conducted by the Educational Testing Service in 1975-76, concluded that although many students did benefit from drill and practice programs, they are not the answer to underachievement in writing.[3]

Fortunately, through the application of branching techniques, programmers have advanced to what Richard Atkinson of Stanford calls *tutorial* CAI. If a student has a series of successes, the program will branch to a more advanced series of frames; if a student is making errors, the program will branch to frames that explain the concepts involved. Using a student's record and a computer's speed, tutorials are in effect able to maintain constant, and instant, individualization. Such tutorial use of CAI in public schools in California and Washington State has proved highly successful: studies showed that in addition to gains in skills, student attitudes toward instruction improved. Despite its success, however, tutorial CAI, like drill and practice, still encourages convergent thinking.

As it turns out, there is no reason why computers should not be able to help students write essays. This third type of CAI — what Atkinson calls dialogue systems — allows students the freedom to construct natural language responses, ask questions in an unrestricted way, and in general exercise almost complete control over the sequence of learning events. On many campuses across the country, such dialogue systems have already been achieved and are used in actual writing instruction.

The first system was created at the University of Michigan in 1973 by Robert Bishop for use in his journalism classes. His approach calls for students to be given the information they would need for a news story — who, when, where and how. Students then sit down at the computer and type in what they think would be a good story on that event. The computer, meanwhile,

has been programmed so that it has a list of key words which Bishop thinks should be contained in his particular story. With the aid of the computer program, journalism students are able to practice writing stories and get instant responses. Such practice, however, is never intended to substitute for instructor reactions.

The second dialogue system, created by Hugh Burns of the Air Force Academy, helps students prepare to write by asking them a series of questions. Typically students about to write an essay sit down individually at a computer, type in what they think their essay subject might be, and enter thirty to sixty minutes of questioning intended to help them think more deeply about their subject. Such use of the computer seems an effective way to each invention, to encourage divergent thinking by all our students — even the most advanced. The third dialogue system, developed by Richard Lanham of U.C.L.A., is used during the revision stage of writing. He has the computer "read" the essays students type into computer terminals, and then print out statistics on sentence length, use of "to-be" verbs and "-tion" words (indications of what Lanham calls "official" or bureaucratic prose). After each statistic is a one-line message warning about convoluted sentences if sentence length is too long, about passivity if there are to many to-be verbs, etc. Once apprised of these characteristics in their prose, students begin to rewrite.

This use of the computer as a supplement to, rather than a substitute for, classroom instruction characterizes all of these systems. Computers cannot replace teachers of writing. As Hubert Dreyfus, Professor of Philosophy at the University of California at Berkeley, and Joseph Weizenbaum, Professor of Computer Science at M.I.T. have argued, computers lack the emotions, the depth of intellect, the judgement or the wisdom of human beings.[4] Accordingly, we view the computer as an effective tool, not a panacea, for improving writing. The goal of CAI is to supplement and enhance the teacher's role, not to diminish or replace it.

INTEGRATING DONALD DAVIS' TOPOI INTO THE FRESHMAN COMPOSITION RESEARCH PAPER ASSIGNMENT

Written originally by Hugh Burns and modified by others including Donald Davis of the University of Illinois, TOPOI is a computer program designed to stimulate rhetorical invention in the early stages of the writing process. As Hugh Burns explains it, "The basic idea is simple enough: a computer program asks questions, and a writer answers the questions. In terms of creativity theory, these computer programs generate content-free "matrices of thought" by asking specific heuristic questions, and the writer responds with other matrices of thought based on the specific knowledge of a situational context."[5] We know that students often do not know how to articulate their experience and ideas on a given topic. They often lack strategies for approaching a topic, and fail to clarify their audience, purpose and central idea. With TOPOI, they learn to ask the right questions about their stance vis-a-vis a given topic. The stimulative power of TOPOI's questions doesn't depend upon the content of the topic but upon the questions themselves. The student must have the content, must be the person who has prepared, whose curiosity will finally evaluate the quality of his/her findings.

We found TOPOI to be especially appropriate for writing research papers in our Freshman Composition course. The first part of the program asks students to state and focus a topic, to identify audience and purpose, and to clarify a central idea. The second part consists of a menu of six rhetorical patterns — Definition, Circumstance, Comparison, Relationship, Testimony and Consequences. Seven to ten heuristic questions are written within each category and, depending upon the nature of the rhetorical pattern to be used in the assignment (argument, cause and effect, etc.), the student chooses one or more relevant categories as an aid to invention. Insofar as questions under "Testimony" relate to research, they apply to most rhetorical patterns.

Adapting TOPOI to the research paper assignment, we followed this procedure:

A. During the first two weeks of the semester, we acquainted students with the computer facilities — ten Apple IIe micros housed in the library. Using the program "Apple Introduces Apple" and overviewing TOPOI, students became comfortable with the computer within one hour.
B. Shortly thereafter, we assigned the research paper — a thesis and support essay of at least six typed pages, using at least eight sources.
C. After selecting topics, students began to browse in the library, to compile working bibliographies and to take notes.
D. At this stage, students were more or less ready to encounter the computer and TOPOI's questions on Testimony:
    1. What do supporters of "topic" say?
    2. What do opponents of "topic" say?
    3. What is your own opinion, "student name"?
    4. Are there any sayings, proverbs, poems or songs related to "topic"?
    5. Are there any books, magazines, movies or television programs related to "topic"?
    6. Do any famous persons have opinions on "topic"?
    7. Are there any laws or legal precedents related to "topic"?
    8. Are there any facts or statistics related to "topic"?
    9. Can you use any of your opponents' agruments to support your own?
    10. What further research is necessary?

Students were required to answer these questions, and they were encouraged to experiment with questions under various other categories. Students left the computer center with two printouts of questions and answers, one to be submitted to the instructor.

E. We then reviewed student printouts, making suggestions where appropriate. So as to stimulate invention, "divergent" thinking, we did not grade responses.
F. Next, we asked students to do further research, focused and directed by their own unanswered questions. Recognizing the recursive nature of the writing process, we encouraged students to return to TOPOI at later stages of the assignment. Researchers concur that writers invent throughout the entire writing process, often returning to earlier writing to refocus and reinvent.
G. Finally, students were asked to submit all printouts of their work with TOPOI along with the final copy of the research paper.

PROJECT EVALUATION

Student Response:

Since Fall of 1983, seventy-one students have used TOPOI. Forty-four students expressed unreserved enthusiasm, twenty-one found TOPOI helpful but suggested improvements in the soft — and hardware, and six described frustrating experiences. Seven students criticized the nature of the questions: five thought the questions were not specific enough and two thought some of the questions were irrelevant. Two problems emerged: first, the program allots a certain amount of memory space (9-12 lines, subdivided into 3-4 line per part) for an answer. Despite careful warning, some students exceeded the alloted space and lost everything that they have typed into memory. The program needs a fail-safe routine. Secondly, errors erased on the CRT appeared as character strikeovers on the printout. With the assistance of Philip Cutler of the Computer Center, we have corrected the latter problem. Mr. Cutler has also programmed a bell-toned sound to warn students when they are about to exceed alloted memory space. We believe the ideal solution to this problem, however, is to program more memory space for student writing, and we are currently working to this end.

Regarding invention, the overwhelming majority of students expressed enthusiasm: "TOPOI suggested ideas that I hadn't thought about and led me to research my paper more thoroughly." "It helped me get started and made me see my paper's topic from new angles." "It helped me realize what further research was needed." Many students also found TOPOI helpful for arrangement: "It helped me organize my ideas." "It was excellent for outlining." And many students enjoyed learning to use the computer: "It was fun working with the computer." "It made my work fun. Computers are helpful. I hope to become more familiar with them." These are representative comments.

Instructor Evaluation:

First, students approach the task of writing, particularly a research paper, with anxiety. Using TOPOI alleviated this apprehension because the program provided rhetorical guidelines through which the student explored the problem. Students consistently expressed a positive attitude toward the research paper assignment. Many mentioned that researching became less "boring" and more "fun" because the questions stimulated further interest in their topic. Furthermore, students expressed pleasure over having had the opportunity to learn more about the computer. Virtually all students were interested in learning how to apply the computer to writing. As instructors, we are of course capitalizing on the current popularity of computers.

Second, TOPOI consists of questions which do not ask for a "correct" response. Consequently, students enter into a good-faith relationship with the program, recognizing that the responsibility for quality is his/her own. Further, this non-judgemental aspect of the program encourages invention, freedom of expression, creativity.

Third, students become aware of fundamental questions which apply to all kinds of writing — purpose, thesis, audience, writer's relationship to topic and audience. Moreover, students become acquainted with various rhetorical patterns (definition, comparison and contrast, etc.) with which to approach the problem of writing on a topic. The program is comprehensive, applicable to most rhetorical patterns; therefore, the categories and questions force the student to determine the relevance of each to his/her topic. As a result, the student learns more about rhetorical approaches to problem solving in writing.

Fourth, student writing tended to be specific, carefully researched and well organized. Many students stated that TOPOI asked essential questions they had not thought of asking, and that TOPOI helped them outline ideas.

Fifth, students recognized the function of the computer as a tool in a larger process which incorporated instructor review, individual conferencing, and class discussion of questions related to rhetoric. We believe that this is the most appropriate and effective way to use a computer in teaching writing.

Finally, from an instructor's point of view, TOPOI's open-ended question format provides a model for designing programs appropriate to other teaching objectives. This format can be used, for example, to generate questions on literary response/analysis and student journal writing.

CONCLUSION

We are using the computer as a medium to teach students classical rhetorical techniques first explained by Aristotle. We are also employing the educationally proven strategy of questioning as a means to educe information and stimulate discovery. As teachers, we know that asking questions in the classroom is most effective because students interact with peers and instructor; by participating in discussion, students actively explore, discover and clarify their ideas and feelings. We are now discovering that, to a lesser extent, the computer simulates such interaction. As students type their responses

into the computer, they enter into a dialogue which also encourages exploration, discovery and clarification.

Employing the computer in this way supplements but does not replace the classroom experience. Given a writing task, students can proceed independently, using TOPOI as often as necessary, while at the same time benefitting from discussion with instructor and peers. TOPOI is a prewriting program,, but invention is recursive: writers often return to earlier writing to refocus and reinvent. As two prominent researchers have recently concluded, "When students know this (the recursive nature of invention)... we believe that they will more successfully work with procedures similar to those of professional writers, working back and forth throughout their drafts, inventing when they need to, and seeing writing as a means to discover their potential as thinkers."[6]

Our own experience confirms this opinion.

Frank Madden has been teaching for 17 years. He's an Associate Professor of English at Wesichester Community College. He was the former director of the writing center at Westchester Community College. Madden holds a Ph.D. from New York University. Besides his papers and articles, including one in "Insight" *in 1979, he has been active as an actor and director.*

Dr. Louis Chicatelli, an Associate Professor at Westchester Community College, received a Ph.D. in English from State University at Binghamton. He has taken courses in computer languages, basic, PL-I, and Pascal, and he has published on Topoi and the research essay in Computers and Composition, *a national newsletter of the Conference on College Composition and Communication. A recipient of a National Edowment for the Humanities summer seminar fellowship on literary biography, Dr. Chicatelli has also published articles on Matthew Arnold and one the southern writer Reynolds Price.*

FOOTNOTES

[1] J.P. Guilford, "Three Faces of Intellect," *The American Psychologist*, 1959, 14, pp. 469-479.

[2] Guilford, p. 470.

[3] William Wresch, "Computers in English Class: Finally Beyond Grammer and Spelling Drills," *College English*, 44 (September, 1982), 483-490. We are indebted to Wresch for his survey of the latest applications of CAI in writing.

[4] Lee Dembars, "Experts Argue When Computers Could Reason, And If They Should," *New York Times*, 8 May 1977, Sec. 1, p. 1, 34.

[5] "Computing as a Way of Brainstorming in English Composition," Proceedings of *NECC 1981, National Educational Computing Conference* Iowa City: The University of Iowa WEEG Computing Center, 1981.

[6] Raymond J. Rodrigues and Dawn Wilson Rodrigues, Computer Based Invention: Its Place and Potential," *College Composition and Communication*, XXXV (February, 1984), p. 86.

Thinking Small: Some Hopeful Speculation About Faculty Development Programs

by Gail Rogers Rice
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Varied problems in the field of postsecondary education have led to the search for new concepts of faculty, instructional, and organizational development. Challenged by unanticipated financial restraints, criticisms of programs and instruction, a period of little or no growth, and the limitations of tenured-in faculties, college administrators have looked for appropriate strategies to cope with their problems. Some of their efforts have been directed inward and new sources of strength have been sought among personnel already engaged. Consequently, faculty development programs have become a significant change strategy common to postsecondary institutions.

Although faculty development programs are presently operating on many community college campuses and are described in relevant literature, no conclusive evidence attests to their general effectiveness or to the significance of particular strategies for particular types of community colleges.[1] Also, despite the amount of attention devoted to faculty development at many community colleges, significant problems exist at both implementation and operational levels.

A review of the literature concerning community colleges faculty development programs identified a great deal of information about operating and model faculty development programs. In addition to this general information, selective analysis revealed three relevant problems.

The first problem is that faculty development programs tend to be inappropriately structured to support or sustain the anticipated changes. Jabker and Halinski[2] point to an "institutional schizophrenia" which is characterized by a vague commitment to change through faculty development programs, but which is seldom implemented by customary strategies for instituting and sustaining organizational change. Administrators and other planners of faculty development programs tend not to allocate adequate institutional funding or time to faculty development program planning. Additionally, instead of analyzing the specific needs of particular institutions and matching faculty development programs to derived objectives, administrators of faculty development programs tend to adopt plans or models from outside sources. Faculty development plans seldom address immediate, work-related problems specifically articulated by the participants.

The second problem revealed by selective analysis of relevant literature is that their current circumstances have made community college faculty members insecure and therefore unready for or resistant to change. One circumstance which contributes to faculty insecurity is the contrast between the community college faculty member and the community college student. Research findings[3] demonstrate contrasts between faculty and student backgrounds, experiences, and expectations. Faculty and students also tend to have divergent value systems. Furthermore, pre-service training, professional role models, and socialization processes tend to enhance rather than to reconcile faculty-student differences.[4] Another circumstance which contributes to faculty insecurity is reflected in research findings which indicate that faculty members have failed to completely accept the stated goals and objectives of the community college movement.[5] Substantial numbers of community college faculty members appear not to accept the "unique mission, multiple purposes and lofty goals"[6] attributed to the community college movement. Faculty insecurity has also been intensified by reduced funding because cut-backs in staffing and program expansion have limited opportunities for professional advancement. Limited professional advancement opportunities combined, as they have been with increased emphasis on supervisor and student evaluations have further intensified faculty insecurity. Overall, an analysis of pertinent literature

revealed an institutional climate too threatening to enhance community college faculty readiness for development programs and activities because faculty members are threatened by unfamiliar students, ambiguous performance criteria, and limited advancement opportunities. Even the overt and implicit rewards and the motivational factors associated with faculty development programs and activities do little to reduce threatening circumstances. In fact, combined with the generally ambiguous nature of teaching,[7] they tend to intensify faculty insecurity, further reducing the possibility that faculty development programs and activities will affect significant changes in participant behavior.

The third problem revealed by selective analysis of faculty development literature is that little systematic and consistent evaluation of faculty development programs and activities has been conducted. Most evaluations tend to be based on feedback given by participants at the completion of the faculty development program or activity and concerns the "feelings" of the participants. Few faculty development programs are evaluated systematically to determine whether or not they have led to any learning, have changed behavior, or have produced results that have been either anticipated or sustained.[8]

Despite these problems, faculty development programs and activities have persisted and are still regarded as having useful potential. Gaff indicates that faculty development programs and activities are at a transitional point[9] and in need of examination and development before their full potential can be reached. Given the conditions of the times and the present stage of community college faculty development programs and activities, it seems useful at this point to indulge in some hopeful speculation. Very probably the faculty development programs and activities which will really be significant change strategies are those in which interested planners "think small."

Faculty development programs based on informal, volunteer groups articulating their own needs may well be one basic ingrediant in the "thinking small" process. In this context, small, collegue-centered groups are assumed to be better sources of faculty development than are larger, administrator directed and controlled groups. In these collegue-centered groups the direction, depth, and duration of the faculty development programs will be controlled by participants. This may mean that few faculty will overtly engage in this process at any one time. This, however, is not a problem as "thinking small" is primarily concerned with making faculty development an ongoing and integrated part of the regular routine of the institution. Under such circumstances, a faculty participant may join the faculty development program on an intermittant basis entering and leaving in response to his/her particular needs, unique problems, or special interests.

If the "thinking small" process of faculty development were to evolve volunteer faculty should:

— band together with a small number of committed collegues;
— concentrate on a short term project;
— expect little if any immediate or obvious change
  a. be content with a "ripple effect";
  b. be aware that simple things such as bibliographies or even single reading or technique shared through informal discussion can spark a meaningful faculty project;
— spend the greatest amount of time within the small group of interested faculty analyzing and articulating their own problems — (never borrow someone else's problems or strategies; attempt to solve only *one* problem at a time);
— state their problem carefully, outline the possible plans for solving the problem, and outline the plans for evaluating the effectiveness of their strategies *before* implementing the activities;
— monitor their activities consistently; adjust them to derived needs while they are going on; record changes in detail as well as the reasons why these changes were made;
— have a clear beginning point and a clear evaluating or concluding point;
— share their findings;
— be aware that they may be involved in a long-term change process that may "rock the boat";
— bring their own academic and research skills to bear on their own work — examine, articulate, plan, implement, evaluate, and adjust;
— know that faculty development programs and activities are not simplistic "one shot deals"; forget the medical model — faculty development programs and activities are not cures which once applied solve the problem forever;
— think of faculty development as *maintenance* — as a consistent and continuous series of activities which changes and adjusts to the *real* circumstances of a particular faculty.

Faculty development programs and activities conceived and implemented with "think small" guidelines are less apt to jeopardize scarce human and fiscal resources in a period in which such risks cannot be afforded. While "thinking small" does not solve the problems of current faculty development programming, it minimizes them. "Thinking small" offers the additional advantage of amassing information which will encourage the examination and evaluation of every facet of faculty development in a manner which will address the unique problems of each institution.

A native Adirondacker, Dr. Rice has been on the faculty of North Country Community College since 1969. Although presently chairing the Humanities Department, she usually teaches a full schedule of Social Science courses. Dr. Rice's teaching assignments generally include Economics, Political Science and History. She has an Ed.D. from The University Center at Albany, a B.S. from The College at Plattsburgh,

and an A.B. from The Center of Albany. In 1979 she received the Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Teaching.

Faculty development programs were the subject of Dr. Rice's doctoral dissertation. Her interest in this topic grew from grant work assigned when she was a graduate fellow at SUNY Albany's Two Year College Development Center.

FOOTNOTES

[1] Donald P. Hoyt and George S. Howard, "The Evaluation of Faculty Development Programs" *Research in Higher Education*, 1978, pp. 25-37.

[2] Eugene H. Jabker and Ronald S. Halinski, "Instructional Development and Faculty Rewards," *Journal of Higher Education* , 1978, pp. 320-329.

[3] Arthur Cohen, ed., *Toward a Professional Faculty: New Directions for Community Colleges*, (San Francisco, Calif,: Jossey-Bass, 1973), pp. 101-118.

[4] Richard C. Richardson, Jr., "Staff Development: A Conceptual Framework," *Journal of Higher Education*, 1975, pp. 303-311.

[5] James Hammons and Terry H. Smith Wallace. *An Assessment of Community College Staff Development Needs in the Northeastern United States*, (University Park, Penn.: Center of the Study of Higher Education, 1976), pp. 1-20.

[6] Terry O'Banion, ed., *Developing Staff Potential: New Directions for Community Colleges* (San Francisco, Calif.: Jossey-Bass, 1977), pp. 52-57.

[7] Cohen, pp. 105-106.

[8] Hoyt and Howard, pp. 26-27.

[9] Jerry G. Gaff, *Toward Faculty Development: Advances in Faculty, Instructional, and Organizational Development* (San Francisco, Calif.: Jossey-Bass, 1975).

A Preface to the Research Paper: The Student Seminar Approach to Literature

by
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Some year ago, in an introductory course I was giving on prose and poetry, a student submitted a research paper on T.S. Eliot's "The Waste Land." From the opening paragraph, an apt quotation from Eliot's "Thoughts After Lambert," through to the sensitive concluding speculation that the possibility of rebirth in the poem is without substance or outline, the student had faithfully plagiarized Elizabeth Drew's analysis of the poem. I returned the paper the next day, along with a copy of Drew's text on Eliot's poetry.

As a relatively new teacher, I dismissed plagiarizing an entire paper as anomalous; it seemed at the time arbitrary to compare my student's approach to his assignment with that of his peers. The differences in conceived purpose alone between grappling with a difficult task and evading it impressed me as considerable. My subsequent experiences in the classroom, however, convinced me of an undeniable resemblance, not in intent but in content, between the Eliot paper and the more typical venture into research that follows the familiar student receipe of citing overly lengthy and unassimilated passages from critical sources throughout a paper.

To put it positively, the success of the research paper in literature begins with our students' ability to comprehend secondary source material and to organize data into a focused and coherent synthesis. Coming to terms with criticism sharpens their insights and motivates them to re-exam a literary text in the light of their increased understanding of an author's central generalization and of the complexities that lie beneath it.

Theoretically, the organic process from fiction through criticism to judgment is uncomplicated. To the extent that criticism is unassimilated, the process fails. Understanding criticism as a key to fiction prepares students for the often neglected dimension that ought to inform the process, that is, a careful personal and critical response to the text based on their increased capacity to translate a literary work into a rational and coherent scheme. The alternative to making sense of criticism and using it as a means to an end that it helps to define and delimit is quoting it at length or paraphrasing it inadequately with no end in view. In its final form, such a paper shows no sign of the writer's struggle, even of his or her interest, as it systematically reproduces commentaries that remain as ambiguous as the literary text they promise to illuminate.

Ideally, the research paper should occupy an integral place within the context of the course and function as a formal phase in the student's overall experience responding to fiction. In experimenting with the seminar method as an instructional approach that would place greater academic responsibility on my students, I found in the process that the seminar was a natural preface to the research paper. I am not speaking of the traditional seminar as most of us know it. The method needs to be adapted to larger class sizes of twenty-five to thirty students, as well as to a changing student profile. As more students enter college underprepared to succeed, they contradict the old-fashioned idea that students, especially in seminars, ought to like literature, or at least be motivated to read and academically prepared to be critical. We need to bridge possible gaps between our methods and the hard fact that students often dislike literature and are motivated in their dislike by past failures. Our own convictions about the value of research and literary study do not impress students who tend to believe that literature is irrelevant and who, with a sense of false sophistication, dismiss it as untrue, hence trivial.

Before exploring the role of the seminar as a preface to the research paper, I would like to turn briefly to the procedures I've adapted in using this approach to literary study. As these procedures demonstrate, preparing for a seminar replicates and reinforces the skills

that will later play an important part in the research assignment. The course begins in the usual way with the instructor leading discussions of three or four literary works in order to provide a role model for student teachers. It is important for students to realize that our expectations are high, that we require them to be thoroughly prepared to analyze a text. Toward the beginning of the course, students select a literary work from the reading list. They are more likely to choose a congenial topic if the instructor comments briefly on the possible selections. Since most of our literature classes are large, students are asked to form panels of two, three, or even four members who work together on their projects. Each panel is responsible for reading its selected literary work in conjunction with a minimum of four secondary sources.

My initial assumption that weaker students would rely on the efforts of peers who were highly motivated or better prepared was incorrect. I discovered that collaborative learning was not only a procedural necessity, but also a strategy for creating a community of interest in a shared project. Students who are fundamentally uneasy with literature feel a greater freedom to discuss their ideas in the company of equals as they learn from the circulation of ideas within the group. Together, students research their topic and come to grips with primary and secondary sources. When they have thought through and organized their critical and personal responses to the text, they prepare questions for class discussion.

The questions should form a progression from the literal to the figurative level of the literary text. Questions about plot, setting, and characterization lead to more difficult ones which explore areas such as theme, irony, symbolism, and point of view. The instructor may choose to supply the critical vocabulary that students need to analyze fiction either at the beginning of the semester or as the need arises.

There is always the possibility that student-teachers will be unprepared to function as effective critics. The class hour may be exhausted with surface questions about plot and vocabulary with no accounting for larger critical questions that depend on a prior knowledge of secondary sources. Requiring a pre-seminar conference with the instructor helps to eliminate the spectre of a lost hour. The more efficient the instructor in preparing the student-teachers, the less his or her presence will be felt during the class discussion. At the conference, which is scheduled at least a week in advance of the seminar, the instructor and students discuss the text and research and agree on the final form of the questions. The students then type, mimeograph, and distribute them to the class to be used in conjunction with the assigned reading. Given in advance, the questions serve as a guide, alerting the reader to what is important, providing clues to interpreting meaning, and preparing the class for the discussion to come.

On the day of the seminar, the student becomes the teacher, and a new group dynamic takes place. A traditional teacher-student discussion with its accepted system of academic rank gives way to a discussion among peers. A concern with the "right" answer is dispelled by a greater freedom to discuss ideas in the company of equals. Seated in front of the class, the panel takes responsibility for asking and answering questions, for the pace, organization, and direction of the discussion, even for the degree of student involvement. The discussion concludes with the class' evaluation of the seminar leaders who receive a grade from the instructor.

Experimenting with student seminars led me to discover that preparing for a seminar was virtually identical to preparing for the research paper. Both stressed research, command to primary and secondary source material, ability to think critically and to organize critical and personal observations in a coherent synthesis. I introduced the research paper as the formal written phase of the student-teacher's seminar and thus made the research project a part of a total process of responding to fiction. The relevance of the assignment was more apparent to students when the paper was merged with the broader objectives of the course. I continued to use collaborative learning and gave students the option of working together up to the point of the outline.

I found improvement in a critical area that I discussed earlier, that is, in my students' ability to assimilate primary and secondary sources. The seminar proved to be a more efficient learning strategy, partially because it committed students to a series of repeated contacts with their material. At the outset, they read their research independently, as they would for the research project. Repetition, under different circumstances, reinforced learning. The same material was examined again in meeting with the other student-teachers, in conference with the instructor, and in the classroom where discussion leaders and their peers explored the literary text in conjunction with criticism. Students they gained greater control over subject matter. As informed writers who understood their own objectives more clearly by the end of the seminar, they used research to support rather than supplant their own aims in the research project.

The seminar has other merits that make it a valuable preface to the research paper. While it is not designed to teach students how to paraphrase, it does move them to think through their research. As their familiarity with critical concepts increases, so does their facility for expressing them. Peer criticism at the conclusion of the seminar allows for further editing and rethinking prior to focusing, organizing, and writing the research paper. The mechanism of identification with a peer makes a student more open-minded in considering the criticism that is offered. Where there is unanimity in the group's opinion, the criticism tends to be more convincing. The group dynamic provides a greater opportunity for give and take in dealing with suggestions, and these allow the student-teachers to sharpen, refine, and rethink the ideas that will later be explored in the paper.

We come nearer to the primary value of the seminar as a preface to the research paper in raising the question: Why should a seminar absorb and challenge students to work through the selfsame tasks that they often fail to do or do incompletely for their research projects? The distinctive advantages of the seminar are that it requires students to play an active rather than a passive role and to be personally and academically responsible for the successful outcome of the class hour. Their academic initiative is enhanced in circumstances where the instructor is no longer the dominant figure or the ultimate and immediate source of decisions. The majority of my students tell me that it is necessary to read a literary work four or five times to prepare for a seminar, while in other circumstances they sometimes failed to complete assignments that did not interest them. The seminar "forces" them, as they put it, "to know what they're doing," a burden they usually do not feel in less demanding circumstances. The majority tend to research their topics in excess of the minimum requirement. While the research paper places responsibility on students, it does not do it in a public context, nor do students function in a new and more important capacity.

The psychology of the student-teacher model is based on research done by psychoanalyst J.L. Moreno who demonstrated that if an individual enters wholeheartedly into a role, the performance level is often astounding.

Students as teachers achieve levels of performance that usually far exceed their levels of performance as students. It is this level of maximum achievement in a public act that culminates in the student's private act of writing the research paper.

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The Technical/Medical Writing Lab: A Synthesis of Consultants, Computers, Composing, Credit and Interdisciplinary

by
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Orange County Community College opened its VEA-funded, computer-equipped Technical Writing Lab in 1983. This year it has added a Medical Writing Lab section. Although still in its early stages, the Technical/Medical Lab has become an integral part of the college's award-winning Writing Consultancy Project. It illustrates how students, instructors, and technology can work together to improve writing-across-the-curriculum and on-the-job. And all of this is done within the college's academic program — with carefully monitored academic credit.

The Lab Itself

The Technical/Medical Writing Lab's physical location, staffing and equipment reflect its interdisciplinary nature. It is located in the heart of the instructional areas of the programs it serves. Electronic Technology labs are across the hall; OTA and PTA lecture rooms and labs are at either end. Students and instructors see the facility as a literal part of their learning environment.

The Lab is run by English Department writing consultants and technical instructors who work together in the Writing-Consultancy based technical courses (see below).

The equipment includes 17 personal computers and four printers in carrels, and a separate 18-desk instructional area for small group work. Bookshelves, open files, and bulletin boards offer students printed reference materials.

Computer use is limited to word processing and interactive skills tutorials. So the commercial software includes Word Plus PC, an easy-to-operate, but full-function word processing program; Pilot PC for authoring auto-tutorials; and Fast Graphs for adding necessary visuals. Original software of two types is also available: (1) short tutorials on major writing skills problems and technical/medical concepts, and (2) Technical/Medical Writing Lab diskettes with report formats, instructions, checklists, and skills reviews. Both types have been written by the consultants and technical instructors for the specific courses in the consultancy.

But the way all of this is used is more important.

The Lab's Goals

The Technical/Medical Writing Lab is an integral part of the Writing Consultancy Project at OCCC. Their shared goals guide lab use. In this innovative and award-winning program, teams of writing consultants and technical instructors work within technical courses to:

1. improve students' technical writing in these courses and on-the-job;
2. integrate writing instruction into the technical;
3. teach students to TRANSFER and APPLY key writing skills from the English classroom to the technical course;
4. develop support materials using samples from the students' technical situations;

They accomplish these by small instruction segments within the technical course, individual and small group conferences, specially adapted instructional materials, and through the computer-equipped lab.

With the Lab, the instructors can meet a fifth goal:

5. teach the students to write well on the equipment they will use on-the-job.

Employees and accrediting agencies have demanded the twin literacies (writing and computer documentation) from students in the programs.

An Integrated Example

In every day use, The Lab becomes a part, rather than a replacement, of the core student-teacher relationship in writing improvement. Here is how it works in the Writing-Consultancy based Electricity I course each fall:

> At the beginning of their weekly lab, the students meet in the Technical Writing Lab. Their Electricity I instructor goes over the printed direction's for the lab experiment; the writing presentation. This may be lecture, worksheet or computer-based exercise. Students, consultant and instructor then go to the Electricity lab across the hall. There they work the experiment and write lab notebook entries. The consultant and instructor troubleshoot specific problems. During the next seven days, the students return to the Technical Writing Lab at individually scheduled hours. They write the rough draft of their lab summaries at the terminals and edit the summaries, first using Lab Disk checklists and guides, then in individual conferences with the writing consultant. Returning to the terminals, they revise. A final printed draft is graded by both the consultant and instructor. At either the consultant's direction or their own request, the students can use auto-tutorial software to practice correcting a specific writing problem.

A Composing Process Focus

Obviously then the Technical/Medical Writing Lab and this integrated writing instruction can also focus on the entire composing process. Students must examine each step they take in the preparation, writing and revision of their technical reports. Guided primarily by the writing consultant, they must examine the reasons for each choice and the success of the result. Their natural product-orientation, an "A" lab summary, is enlarged: what do I do? when do I do it? how do I do it to produce a good product.

The computer is a particular help here. Its word processing capabilities make revision easier for the students. They will change words and phrases; they are more willing to replace or reposition sentences; they can even be convinced to totally reorganize — because they don't have to do laborious recopying of the entire document. And the auto-tutorials provide individually tailored and paced drill and practice.

Academic Credit Plan

Last spring experimental academic credit was given to Electronic Technology students who used the Lab in their culsultancy-based courses. This was based on their (a) mandatory, individually scheduled computer time, (b) additional conferences and instruction with the writing consultant, and (c) their additional writing. Careful analysis of the results led to creation of a continuing one-credit Technical Writing Module.

Controlled by strict parameters, this module is attached to designated courses within the technical programs. Students must concurrently register for it and the technical course. Their work counts for both, They do, however, receive a separate grade in each.

Success? New Challenges?

From 1981 through Fall 1983, the Lab and the Writing Consultancy Project functioned as an experiment at OCCC. Would such an approach work — for the students? for the instructors? within the technical course settings? considering loading? staffing? economics?

Student writing improvement suggests it works, Feedback from employers, clinical supervisors and accrediting agencies supports it, The college has been awarded two VEA grants based partially on this track record. The program has been chosen as a 1984 Best-of-Showcase Project by SUNY's Two-Year-Development Center. It was the cover story for the November 1983 *Community & Junior College Journal*. The Technical Writing Lab Grant was nominated for a US Department of Education award. So the Technical Writing Lab does seem a success.

For writing instruction, the Lab and Consultancy Project still present challenges. The critical balance among students, teachers and technology must always be maintained. The machine is a temptress who can beguile. Yet it is DUMB; its worth comes from the way it is used. Its best use is as an integrated aid.

So the writing teacher and technical instructors must work together — and their major focus must always be the student. Their teaching aid is the computer. Whether they choose a pattern like OCCC's or a variation of it, they must keep the critical balance.

* *For a more detailed explanation of this project, read H. Pollack & C. Godwin, "The Writing Consultancy Project" (Cover Story), Community and Junior College Journal, November 1983, pp. 34-36.)*

Christine M. Godwin supervises the Writing Consultancy Project and coordinates the Technical Writing Lab at OCCC. An Associate Professor of English, she has co-authored Writing Skills for Nurses (Reston, 1983). Her Insight *'80 article, "Interdisciplinary Reading-Writing: A Model That Works" details the earliest project from which the Consultancy and Technical Writing Lab have evolved.*

Esprit: A Humanities Magazine

by
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Barry John Capella, Instructor of English
SUNY College at Farmingdale

In March of 1984 we published the first issue of a new semi-annual humanities magazine for the two-year colleges of New York State. Its title, *Esprit*, of course means "spirit"; equally as important, it means "liveliness of mind and expression." We mean the title to refer, specifically, to the spirit of the Humanities and of humanistic study — and, in general, to that sense of spirit which Pater speaks of in the "Conclusion" of his collection of essays entitled *Studies in the History of the Renaissance*. Is there a more impressive or inspiring statement of the need to keep one's *spirit* awake?

> . . . The service of . . . speculative culture . . . towards the human spirit is to rouse, to startle it to a life of constant and eager observation. Every moment some form grows perfect in hand or face; some tone on the hills or sea is choicer than the rest; some mood or passion or insight or intellectual excitement is irresistibly real and attractive to us — for that moment only. . . . How may we see . . . all that is to be seen . . . by the finest senses? How shall we pass most swiftly from point to point, and be present always at the focus where the greatest number of vital forces unite in their purest energy?
>
> To burn always with this hard, gemlike flame, to maintain this ecstasy, is success in life. In a sense it might even be said that our failure is to form habits . . . While all melts under our feet, we may well grasp at any exquisite passion, or any contribution to knowledge that seems by a lifted horizon to set the spirit free for a moment . . . . Not to discriminate every moment some passionate attitude in those about us, and in the very brilliancy of their gifts some tragic dividing of forces on their ways, is, on this short day of frost and sun, to sleep before evening.

This vivid apprehension of life that Pater so movingly describes, this awakening of the spirit and keeping it awake, is what, ideally, education in the Humanities is essentially about. But despite the obvious importance of humanistic study and sharing, the spirit of the Humanities is in trouble on many fronts; especially is this true on two-year college campuses. *Esprit* was founded, funded, and came to fruition to confront, indeed combat, the spirit's foes — and to enliven and encourage and help rearm humanistic patriots.

In the late spring of 1982, we found ourselves discussing — spiritedly — the apparent decline of interest in the Humanities on the part of students, the waning of humanistic spirit within our colleagues, the doubt expressed in the community (in fact, in the nation) concerning the relevance of study in the Humanities, and the seeming indifference, culturally, to the special truths inherent in and fostered by humanistic study. The ominous rise and noise of a facile technological tide — accompanied by pseudo-mysterious murmurs of "software," "hardware," "floppy disks," "compatibility" — were more and more oppressive, while awareness of the importance of the Humanities was eroding in an evermore powerful undertow. Clearly, something was wrong.

We wondered, therefore, what might be done to respond to this discouraging situation and to affect favorably, even redirect, the climate that threatened to prevail. It seemed that in terms of student *cognizance* (meaning what one is able to "know" and "understand" in the *best* sense) emphasis was increasingly being placed on the first syllable — the student as COG — rather than on an educative process that enhanced sensibility.

One way to fight back, we thought, would be to provide a forum for stimulating humanistic communication of various kinds — aesthetic, critical, theoretical, practical — thereby addressing the challenge directly.

At first we considered an in-house publication at OCCC for this purpose, believing that a revitalization of spirit and communication among the faculty and staff members would inevitably affect students positively. We were, in fact, dismayed to discover that all of us knew so little about each other's intellectual and aesthetic concerns and accomplishments.

Soon, however, determined to go further, we considered a humanities-oriented magazine for *all* two-year colleges in the state, assuming (correctly, as we later discovered) that many faculty and staff members elsewhere were feeling as dispirited as we. Thus, *Esprit* was born, its imaginative thrust deriving from two primary sources: (1) an awareness that the spirit of humanities education and communication is of *vital* importance to two-year colleges and (2) a belief that every effort must be made to preserve, protect, and enhance that spirit's viability and efficacy.

We decided that by publishing creative and critical writing and humanities-oriented essays by two-year college faculty and staff — as well as reproductions of paintings, drawings, sculpture, photographs, etc., by two-year college artists — and by disseminating humanistic information, *Esprit* would serve four basic purposes:

(1) encourage aesthetic/humanistic communication among the faculty and administrative staff members of New York State two-year colleges;

(2) provide an outlet for their creative and critical expression and promote it throughout the state;

(3) explore the relevance and importance of study in the humanities to student preparation for careers in other programs and disciplines;

(4) dispense a variety of information apropos of study in the humanities.

As symbol (and talisman) we chose the sculpted rendering of Laocoön in the Vatican Collection to visualize the struggle of the spirit of the Humanities writhing to free itself from various restrictive tentacles; these latter, to our minds, suggested the influences of numbing practicality, impersonal technological mechanism, and visionless political obduracy. Laocoön, we remembered, was the cautious Trojan who warned against gift-bearing Greeks and who was suspicious of bringing the outwardly awesome technological achievement of the wooden horse (hollow at the core) into the Trojan inner sanctum.

We proceeded to write a four-page proposal for *Esprit*, including a statement of philosophy, a list of intentions, an editorial policy, and an outline of the projected scope. The magazine would seek submissions in the following categories:

- *creative writing* (poetry, short fiction, drama),
- *art work* (photographs of paintings, drawings, sculpture, etc.),
- *photography*,
- *critical articles* based in the humanities (vis-a-vis all areas of artistic expression),
- *essays* (other than pedagogical — and especially in reference to the value of study in the humanities for students preparing for careers in other areas),
- *interviews* (especially with New York State community college artists and writers),
- reviews of major relevant books, movies, plays, exhibits, concerts, etc., *off-campus*,
- *reports* on important seminars, conferences, etc.,
- *calendar items* in reference to humanities events,
- *notes and queries*,
- *bibliography* of recent community college faculty and administrative staff humanities-related publications, paper presentations, exhibits, etc.,
- *forum* for reader responses.

During the fall of 1982, this document in hand, we discussed *Esprit* with our department and vision chairpersons, the Dean of Academic Affairs, and the Dean of Student Affairs: all were enthusiastically receptive, offering constructive comments and both practical and philosophical support. Finally, after presenting our proposal in detail at department and division meetings, we felt confident enough to approach the college president for final approval.

Dr. Mary M. Norman had delivered her inaugural address as the fourth president of Orange County Community College on October 18, 1982. The highlight of the speech was her strong commitment to the importance of humanities training for *all* students:

> Education must be multi-demensional.
> . . . Skills are not enough!
> Consider — to be a technically competent nurse, you must learn how to administer care, and how to do it well. Those of us involved in your education *will* train you well. However, it is not enough that you LEARN HOW TO ADMINISTER CARE to a patient, you must, at the same time, LEARN TO *CARE ABOUT* THE patient. Ah, there is the rub, the human dimension. Don't limit yourself to someTHING, a nurse: rather, expand to become someONE, a special nurse who cares for and about the patient.
> *It is only through liberal and humanistic learning* that this can occur. Remember, information is not knowledge; the skills that you learn today will be outdated in a very few years. But a *liberal education will always be with you*, or better, *you* with it.
> The question then is what should you do, what should you learn to become liberally educated? To begin with, you must open and stretch your mind to confront those issues *which deal with being human.*

It was not surprising, then, that when we proposed our project to Dr. Norman, she applauded our efforts to that point, put her experience and office behind *Esprit*, and made the difference that allowed the magazine to become a reality.

After others at Orange County Community College agreed that *Esprit* was needed for the faculty and administrative staff of the two-year olleges, we sent letters

in the fall of 1982 to vice-presidents and deans statewide. Not only did we wish to publicize the purpose of the magazine, but we wanted to invite responses and suggestions from interested parties outside Orange County. In our letters we also asked the administrators to forward our letter to other individuals who might be sympathetic to our plan. The many responses that we received — often quite eloquent — provided the impetus for us to continue the campaign to make *Esprit* a viable publication. Our colleagues' letters not only contained messages of support for the venture, but concrete proposals — such as to make the magazine as representative of *all* two-year college faculty and administrative personnel as possible. The following excerpts typify the concerns, suggestions, and offers of support expressed statewide.

> I believe it is especially important that interest in the humanities be sustained and strengthened within the two-year college community. For some students, the two-year college represents their sole experience with higher education . . . . It is easy today, amid the frenetic pursuit of career-oriented courses and programs, for students to dismiss or lose sight of the less tangible, but no less important, values associated with the humanities, especially when educators obsessed with enrollment figures are quick to shortchange their own curricula.
>
> (Assistant Professor/English)

> Now more than ever before, community college faculty feel the need for linkage between the various campuses within the SUNY system . . . . *Esprit* promises to provide an appropriate professional vehicle to carry their commentaries, to showcase creative work, and to encourage an exchange of ideas between SUNY faculty.
>
> (Dean/Arts and Humanities Division)

> I want to offer my wholehearted support. Such a publication could, I believe, be a real source of intellectual and esthetic stimulation and exchange and would also assert the potential of community colleges to serve as creative and scholarly centers in their communities and in the State.
>
> (Chairman/Visual and Performing Arts)

> Any development of a vehicle for and about the Humanities should be supported. Putting the obvious budgetary trends aside, the mood of this country these past few years has led to the "training" of individuals under the guise of education. As I am sure you know, the nation is now beginning to recognize the need for broadly educated people. Since this recognition is coming from leaders of industry, it may provide an opportunity for people like yourselves to obtain fiscal (and moral) support.
>
> (Associate Dean/Liberal Arts and Science)

Next, we realized that — despite the overwhelming enthusiasm for the magazine — *fiscal* support would determine whether our hopes for *Esprit* would be realized. Consequently, in the fall of 1982 we also sent letters to approximately 60 corporations and foundations, exploring the possibility of funding for the magazine. Most offered little encouragement and cited the following reasons:

1. They did not support publishing ventures.
2. Generally, they preferred not to fund new projects.
3. They did not fund two-year college projects.

Letters to local businesses and foundations produced the same results overall. Only Orange and Rockland Utilities, Inc., donated funds.

In the spring of 1983, we faced a critical financial situation and decided to seek college support for the first issue. Fortunately, both Dr. Norman and the Dean of Student Affairs provided funding, from both the college itself and the Orange County Community College Association.

Once funding was secured, we mailed approximately 2,500 fliers — enclosed with letters to division and department chairmen, public relations directors, etc. — that stated our concern about the state of the humanities, our specific purpose for founding the magazine, and the types of submissions that we envisioned for the first issue. Dr. Norman and the Vice-President of Administration greatly facilitated our task of corresponding statewide by providing funding for our training in word processing. To further publicize *Esprit*, we asked various journals and newsletters (such as *PMLA* and the *NERC Newsletter*) to include information about the magazine.

Finally, during the fall of 1983, after consulting the many letters and recommendations received advising us about *Esprit*, we formed a Board of Advisory Editors composed of thirteen members from two-year colleges statewide. (It was deemed especially important to make the Board *representative* from the very beginning and to plan to broaden the representation even further as the magazine evolved.) The extremely conscientious attitude and marked diligence of all Board members made editing and designing the inaugural issue of the magazine a distinct pleasure — not only were our spirits lifted by the imaginative and critical communication and by sharing a belief in the importance of the endeavor, but we were convinced that among Humanities faculty and administrators around the state, interest in and support for humanistic education had not really waned, that dedication and determination survived.

With the first issue of *Esprit* distributed throughout the state and with financial support secured for a second issue, we are surprised to discover, looking back over the past wo years, that we have no significant complaints to air. Instead, we feel thankful and gratified to have survived during such perilous times for aesthetic and humanistic endeavors. We have served as willing (even happy) mediums for creative and critical talent

discovered to be solidly present at the crucial two-year college level. And in a sense we have both *been* and received the message: the tentacles of sterile technology (as proffered in a vacuum) and the hollow promises of its misguided apostles will not defeat modern Laocoöns. The spirit of the Humanities — the essence of education in the best sense — remains indomitable.

Professor Donald G. Parker, an Associate Professor at Orange County Community College, has a masters degree in English from North Texas State University and is A.B.D. at New York University. He is currently writing a dissertation on Hart Crane. Professor Parker co-edits and co-founded two magazines: The Visionary Company; *a Magazine of the Twenties, and* Esprit. *He has published articles, essays, interviews, commentary and poetry in such books and magazines as* Matthew Arnold: Man of Letters; Contemporary Poetry; Manhattan Mind, America Writers in Paris, *1920-1939;* The Southern Review; Dictionary of Literary Biography Yearbook; College Poetry Anthology; Hart Crane Newsletter; *and* Bitterroot.

Barry John Capella is an instructor of English at State University Agricultural and Technical College at Farmingdale. He formerly taught at Orange County Community College. He received his B.A. in History from Hunter College; M.A. in English from Boston College; Masters in Philosophy in English from City University of New York Graduate Center; and Ph.D. in English from CUNY Graduate Center. Presentations include departmental finals and a special session of MLA, 1983. Mr. Capella co-edits Esprit *and gave a presentation on the magazine to Community College Humanities Association conference, 1983. He is on the CUNY Ph.D. Alumni Association Board of Directors.*

Innovations In Laboratory Training For MLT AAS-Degree Students

by
Myrtle M. Green, Professor
Medical Laboratory Technician/Medical Assisting Department
Erie Community College

Sonja Hill, Assoc. Professor
Medical Laboratory Technician/Medical Assisting Department
Erie Community College

There are two major options available for training Medical Laboratory Technology (MLT) students in clinical laboratory skills. Students can receive training in campus laboratories or at affiliated area hospital sites.

Most MLT Associate in Applied Science (AAS) degree programs, whether community college based, or 2 + 2 in 4-year institutions, choose the latter. Erie Community College has, for 21 years, provided all the clinical training on campus, and plans to continue to do so as long as this form of competency based education continues to produce qualified, skilled technicians as recognized and approved by the Council on Allied Health Education and Accreditation (CAHEA) and employer evaluations. The faculty have had the foresight to recognize a changing trend in medical laboratory technical training options available and have pioneered a new approach to laboratory training for its students.

At Erie, during the past ten years the faculty had shifted training away from traditional group experimentation in laboratory, to emphasis on individual and independent clinical laboratory exercises in order to better attain competency in laboratory skills. During a major curriculum revision in 1976, the faculty included a STAT LAB course which would require students to "work in a simulated hospital laboratory setting". The campus STAT LAB during its seven years of operation, has provided the atmosphere, constraints and requirements of a "real" hospital STAT LAB where medical tests must be performed STAT, i.e., "as quickly and accurately as possible". This article's co-authors presented its format and procedures to MLT educators across the nation in an article which was published in the *American Journal of Medical Technology*, Dec. 1983 issue under the title of "Special Training Under Simulated STAT LAB Conditions".

The article generated much interest and many requests for further information. Dr. Lorraine Renkowski and Professor Louise Eisenbrey of Mercy College, Detroit, Michigan, visited the facilities in May 1984. They were able to observe a working STAT LAB with students performing emergency procedures. Favorably impressed, they planned to adopt similar training for their MLT students this year. Faculty in other states are reporting that MLT programs which had originally provided a hospital site for clinical training are now seeking a viable alternative. The application of federal legislation is radically altering payment procedures by third-party payors — Medicare, Medicaid and medical insurance companies. Hospitals must cut costs wherever possible. To train students in hospital labs is very costly and thus no longer feasible.

The STAT LAC course at Erie is titled "Emergency Clinical Lab Procedures". Students are required to use skills already attained in other laboratory courses including hematology, blood banking, microbiology and clinical chemistry. New techniques and procedures in urine analysis and examination of other body fluids such as spinal fluid are learned early in the semester. The student is constantly required to perform them as STATS during the remainder of the semester. Routine laboratory functions such as keeping a laboratory log and calling reports to a simulated nurses' station are

part of the lab protocol. The student performs all the laboratory log and calling reports to a simulated nurses' station are part of the lab protocol. The student performs all the labotaroy tests required to aid the physician in the establishment of a diagnosis or course of treatment for his patient. In a simulated hospital lab setting, he or she receives clinical specimens (blood and urines) which are provided by local cooperating medical institutions, and makes entries into the lab log. He or she then performs the analyses following procedures outlined in the stat lab manual, records results and calls the report to a simulated nurses' station. The student files the report and makes closing entries in the log.

Every effort is made to provide an immediate evaluation of student performance. Sometimes tests can be checked or verified by comparing his or her report with that which was reported by the hospital technician. When the student must make fresh slide preparations for microscopic examination, the instructor immediately reviews the slide to confirm the accuracy of the report. If necessary, the instructor will give individual attention to the student and point out objects which were missed, misidentified, misclassified, or miscounted. Additional tests are given to the student to help correct deficiencies noted.

Each year the faculty has been able to improve the operation of the STAT LAB. Some of the more time-consuming manual procedures have been replaced with newer instrumentation. Development of a specimen coding system has aided in recognition of test values for most specimens, allowing speedier evaluation. Newer technique for preparing "simulated spinal fluid" has improved these specimens.

The STAT LAB this academic semester, Spring 1984, will include electronic record keeping. The faculty have written computer programs specially designed to simulate current practice in medical and lab institutions. The student is required to record and retrieve data for all tests requested and performed. In addition, the computer can be used by the student to perform laboratory calculations. The faculty will be able to use the computer to improve the evaluation process and chart student progress in meeting the terminal performance objectives of the laboratory course.

The faculty of the Medical Lab Technology department believe that the STAT LAB is the wave of the future in terms of training. We are convinced that this type of clinical training will be a viable training surrogate for hospital-based lab and may be the only alternative for many students in other communities in the nation. It provides a more comprehensive, structured regimen for exposing students to a wide variety of emergency procedures, some of which might not be encountered during an internship. In short, the student is provided a means of "working" in a hospital lab setting to gain competencies mandated by national standards without being subjected to the inherent difficulties and structures of limited and generally overworked hospital based personnel. It is possible to individually tailor the training to provide maximum benefit to each student.

Myrtle Green is a Professor in the Medical Laboratory Technician/Medical Assisting Department of Erie Community College in Buffalo. Since 1979, she has contributed to the MLT curriculum revision and continuing update, developing courses in the areas of Immunology, Serology, Immunohematology, and STAT LAB - Emergency Clinical Lab Procedures. She has also been active in the Medical Assisting Program. In addition, she holds an appointment to the Clinical Faculty of Health Related Professions at SUNY Buffalo. She provides teaching experience for professionals working toward the M.S degree in Allied Health Education and Evaluation.

Mrs. Green received a B.S. in Medical Technology from D'Youville College, Buffalo and an M.S. in Biology from S.U.C. Buffalo, and has taken additional advanced coursework at SUNY Buffalo Medical School. Prior to her teaching appointment, she gained experience in Medical Technology at Mercy Hospital, as Head Technician at Our Lady of Victory Hospital, and as a Jr. Cancer Research Scientist at Roswell Park Memorial Institute, Buffalo.

An active member of Empire State Association of Medical Technologists, she was Program Co-chairperson for this organization's 1984 Spring Seminar and Exhibits which was held in Buffalo, N.Y. She is also a member of the American Association of Blood Banks.

Sonja C. Hill received her B.S. degree in Medical Technology and her M.S. degree in Allied Health Education and Evaluation from S.U.N.Y.-Buffalo. Her clinical experience was in local hospitals and private laboratories. Professor Hill is a member of the American Society for Medical Technology, American Society of Clinical Pathology and is also certified as a Clinical Laboratory Scientist.

Employed at Erie Community College-Buffalo, for the past fourteen years, she has been instrumental in curriculum developments in Hematology/Coagulation and Emergency Clinical Procedures. Currently she is Chairperson of the Medical Laboratory Committee, a member of the Planning Council and Faculty advisor to the MLT student Club.

Other activities include Program Chairperson for the 1984 Spring Seminar and Exhibits of the Empire State Association for Medical Technology and Clinical Faculty at the S.U.N.Y.-Buffalo School of Health Related Professions.

A Peer Evaluation

by Kay McKemy
Professor of English
Westchester Community College

Among the Dead Sea Scrolls discovered many years ago was the following report, which seems to be a sort of teacher evaluation. The document has not been previously published, as it is of small value to theologians and historians. however, educators might find the following translation of the ancient scroll interesting. (Some of the words and names have been blurred by time.)

Visitation Report
Professor (blurred)
Date (blurred)

The class began ten minutes late, as a result of the teacher's leading his very large class up a mountainside. It should be noted that the instructor had not notified the office of the change of location of the class. This practice must not be repeated.

Apparently the instructor does not understand the importance of keeping records, as he did not take the roll.

The students sat on the ground, which in addition to being very uncomfortable provided no surface on which to write. As a result, only one student, Matthew, who sat by a flat stone, was able to take notes. It should also be mentioned that not one single student had his textbook with him.

The teacher was well prepared and delivered a good lecture with many illustrative examples, in spite of the fact that he used no notes. However, the class was just that, a lecture, with absolutely no participation from the students. The teacher made one statement after another (e.g., "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy," and "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God") without giving the students any opportunity whatsoever to discuss the points, ask questions, or contribute observations from their own experience.

Further, the teacher would occasionally ask a question, such as, "But if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltness be restored?" and then give no chance for the students to answer that question

The class was, in short, completely teacher-centered.

Further, the instructor jumped from one area to the next (anger-reconciliation, neighbors-enemies, etc.) without summarizing the previous point or providing any transition to the next. In fact, entirely too much was attempted for one class session, and the instructor would do well to plan more thoroughly, giving more thought to each point and limiting the scope of his daily lessons.

What the instructor's goals were would be hard to say. He made no summary at the end of the period, and he gave no assignment.

Concerning discipline, the teacher should be informed that eating during class is not the policy of this institution. It was noted that the students were passing around bread and fish, certainly an unfortunate distraction during the lecture. Afterwards the litter looked as if a crowd of five thousand had tossed fishbones and crusts on the ground.

Professor (blurred) did hold the attention of the students, for he has a rather magnetic personality and is, in fact, extemely popular with his following of rather dissident students. However, to be an effective teacher he must be encouraged to plan and organize his classes, perhaps making use of educational media, to actively involve his students in the learning process, and to define his behavioral objectives.

If, and only if, he agrees to these suggestions, I recommend that he be re-hired for next year.

(Signed): Dominic Malvonius
Title: Professor of (blurred)

Kay McKemy, Professor of English at Westchester Community College, has published a biographical novel, 35 articles, and 9 poems, with subjects ranging from Lord Byron's toothpowder to motorhome storage. She holds the B.A. from Missouri University and the M.A. from Columbia. Peekskill is her home. Most of the time she has either her foot in her mouth or her tongue in her cheek.

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INSIGHT

1985-86

CALL FOR PAPERS

Faculty of the community colleges of the State University of New York are invited to submit articles for inclusion in **Insight,** an annual collection of articles on teaching and learning by faculty of the community colleges. The publication is co-sponsored by the SUNY Faculty Council for Community Colleges and the University's Central Administration Office for Community Colleges.

Subject: Analysis, interpretation, research or reporting of innovative philosophy, programs and techniques used in teaching community college students.

Length: About 2,000 to 3,000 words (manuscripts should be typed and double-spaced).

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Deadline: September 1, 1985

Where to send manuscripts: Office of Community Colleges
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Publication Date: Spring, 1986

Questions: Feel free to contact Charles A. Burns, at the above address or telephone (518) 473-1843.

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